

Family Living Connection

Julie Keown-Bomar, Family Living Educator

Be In Motion This Winter!



Have you started to put on some winter weight? Are the winter blahs darkening your mood? Getting in motion can help your mind and body get in better shape. When you live in a state that has winter for months on end, one of the best ways to cope is to find something you and your family love to do outdoors.

Children will not only enjoy the activities now, but they will grow into active adults, with lower risk of obesity, stroke and heart disease, and certain kinds of cancers.

Parents can motivate children to stay active and healthy in winter, but this means going beyond sending kids outside to play. Parents can participate in activities with their children, modeling healthy levels of movement and teaching them activities they can enjoy throughout their life.

Activities do not always need to be structured ones or even far from home. Adopting a new winter sport, like ice-skating, cross-country skiing or ice fishing can help a family look forward to winter. Test out a new sport by renting equipment or borrowing from family or friends before you spend money on new purchases.

Creating activities that use snow as an imaginative playground, such as building a play igloo are affordable and fun. Several igloos combined can turn into a village, a

castle, or a fort. Use colored water or Kool-Aid® for a colorful spray-on finish.

Other ideas to try:

- Create snow angels in your backyard. Climb a snow mountain. Make paths in the snow.
- Go on a nature hike. Walk through the park or neighborhood looking for animal tracks in the snow and try to identify the animal.
- Take a trip to a zoo to see the animals in their winter coats, or go to the park and look for birds or small animals.
- Blow bubbles outside when it is really cold. Will they freeze?
- Decorate trees for the birds by hanging apples, popcorn strings, or pinecones rolled in peanut butter.
- Build a snowman together, go sledding, shovel the driveway or take the dog for a walk.

Power Breakfast Ideas

Research shows that eating breakfast has high rewards for kids of all ages. Children who eat breakfast are healthier, more likely to maintain a healthy weight, have better school performance, and have fewer behavior problems compared with children who skip breakfast. Try these nutritious ideas:

Breakfast Buffet

Try a breakfast buffet with sliced fresh fruits, finger food vegetables, hard-boiled eggs, whole-wheat muffins. The more colorful, the better, and kids love to help themselves.

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Breakfast Parfait

Layer yogurt, fruit, and granola in glasses for a parfait look.

Rice Pudding

Mix leftover rice, low-fat yogurt, dried fruit, nuts, and cinnamon.

Pita Pizza

Fill pita bread with your favorite low-fat cheese, cooked lean meat, and vegetables. Heat in microwave.

Egg Burrito

Fill a soft flour tortilla with scrambled eggs, boiled potato, refried beans, or salsa.



Waffles, Pancakes, French Toast

Ready-made items that can be toasted or microwaved. Try whole grain varieties.

Sandwich Roll-Up

Try peanut butter and banana or jelly on a flour tortilla.

Fruit Salad

Mix fruit with yogurt or cottage cheese.



Hot Fruit

Top canned or fresh fruit with brown sugar and nuts. Heat in oven or microwave.

Breakfast Pizza

Top a toasted English muffin with cheese and cooked sausage or ham. Heat in microwave until cheese is slightly melted.

Hot Cereal

Use quick-cooking oats and add dried or fresh fruit, nuts, and brown sugar.



Resources:

- North Dakota State University Extension Service, Reading Partners: Parents and Children
- UW-Extension, Parenting the Preschooler, Joan E. LaFebvre
- USDA Eat Smart. Play Hard™, Power Up With Breakfast
- Child Development Institute
http://www.childdevelopmentinfo.com/health_safety/nutrition.shtml

A Winter Treat

Do you and your children have cabin fever? Consider coming to 4-H Discovery Day (open to non-4-H'ers, K-8th grade) on February 11th at CVTC for an afternoon of fun, affordable workshops. From 1:00-4:00 pm children and parents can participate in a wide variety of hands-on experiences. Make a model rocket, a terrarium in a pop bottle, learn to knit or crochet, take better photos, make jewelry, healthy snacks, or a bird feeder, and much, much more! Registration deadline is February 4th. Go to our website, <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/eauclaire/index.html> for a complete brochure, or call 715-839-4712.