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# Family to Family

A Newsletter to families from families

## Fun and Stress Relieving Activities (Feature Article) By Josanne Pearsall

Times are stressful and with the hectic pace of our lives, it is important to remember to take the time to relax. Having fun is very important to our wellbeing and overall stress reduction. Here are some ideas to help you.

**Do Yoga:** It's a simple and fun way to bring some peace into a busy day. Try this yoga exercise alone or with your child. Lie on your back and pedal your arms and legs in the air while saying "ha, ha, ha" in sync with the movement of your legs and arms. Before you know it the stress is released and the giggling will start.

**Blow Bubbles:** It's fun and will relax you at the same time. To

blow really good bubbles, you need to blow them with a slow and controlled breath. The long inhales and exhales help to slow down your body and make it more relaxed. And watching those bubbles float into the air is soothing and sure to bring on a smile. To make your own bubble solution combine 1/2 cup of dish-washing liquid, 2 cups of water and 2 teaspoons of sugar and enjoy.

**Try a Puzzle:** Do a puzzle, either online or offline. It is an easy and quick way to relax. It can be a puzzle game on the computer, Rubik's cube or a crossword puzzle. The great thing is that it is a quick "stress break".



### Have Fun!

**Go Outside:** Going outside is one of the easiest ways to have fun, relieve stress and one more thing-it's free. So head outside and play a game of hide and seek, walk in the woods or garden together. Each of our four seasons offers new sights and activities.

## Hand in Hand (Building Family) by Deidre Genovese

Summer is here and we are always looking for new ways that our families can connect with one another. At many of our sites we have a Resource Board that is available for all families. On our Resource Board's you will find various information on many different topics. If you



have any information on upcoming events, recreational events, or community events that are appropriate for our special needs families, please feel free to contact a Family Faculty member at your site so we can post them.

### Parent Tips

- Prepare your child before you leave your house. Let them know where you are going, who will be there, how long you will stay and what is expected from them. If everyone is on the same page from the start, outings will be much easier for everyone!
- We often relax bedtimes and other routines during the summer, but August is the perfect month to make bedtime a bit earlier each week. Your child will be going to bed at "school bedtime" by the time the third week of August arrives.
- Fun in the sun, plan a beach outing later in the day. Bring healthy snacks, food, bubbles, & baby powder to get rid of the sand before you get in the car.



## Healthy and Happy (Health and Wellbeing) By Carrie Snyder

During the summer it is important to protect ourselves from the heat. Heat exhaustion, without prompt treatment can turn into life-threatening heatstroke. Anyone can develop heat exhaustion, but certain risks increase your sensitivity to heat; young age or old age, certain medications and obesity are a few .

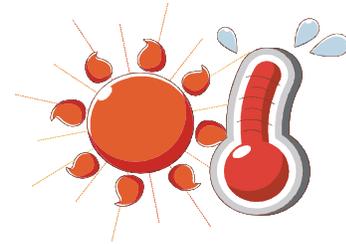
Signs and symptoms of heat exhaustion can develop gradually or come on suddenly and include:

- Cool, moist skin with goose bumps when in the heat
- Heavy sweating

- Faintness
- Dizziness
- Fatigue
- Weak, rapid pulse
- Low blood pressure upon standing
- Muscle cramps
- Nausea
- Headache

Things you can do to help prevent heat exhaustion.

- Wear loose fitting, lightweight, light-colored clothing.



### Protect yourself from the heat

- Always use sunscreen; you both protect yourself from heat exhaustion and sunburn!
- Stay in the shade or in air conditioning when the weather is brutally hot.
- Stay hydrated, drink plenty of fluids.
- Avoid hot spots. On a hot day, the temperature in your parked car can rise 20 F (about 11 C) in just 10 minutes. Let your car cool off before you drive it. Never leave chil-

## Did You Know? (Educational Tidbits) By Sharon Clarken

We all love taking our children to the movies but sometimes we aren't quite sure whether or not their new favorite movies are age appropriate. It can become a battle with our young ones about what we as parents see as suitable for their eyes.

So before you venture out to the local theaters this summer check out [www.parentpreviews.com](http://www.parentpreviews.com). The Web site features a family

*"And remember, we as parents are our children's best censors!"*

oriented review of all the new movies in the theaters as well as on home video. They look for different elements when grading these movies including; violence, sexual content, language, alcohol/drug use and an overall grade. This original idea began with a family in 1993 where they would

sell their family perspective on movies to local newspapers. It was a novel idea at the time, and today many parents consider it a necessity to know what's in a movie before going! And remember, we as parents are our children's best censors!

## Family Fun (Family Activities) By Linda Waddell

Now that the beautiful weather has arrived and the cold days are behind us, it is a great time of year to get out of the house and take advantage of everything New Jersey has to offer outdoors. New Jersey is abundant with parks and recreational areas we can appreciate.

Parks offer families a fun day, are easy on a budget and handicap accessible.

Besides having great paths to walk, which offer fresh air and exercise, many local towns offer music or movies in the park on selected evenings. Liberty State Park is one of my favorite destinations because of its beautiful location and great views of the Statue of Liberty. Whether you plan an



extravagant picnic or a spur of the moment outing ... Just get out of the house and enjoy the summer!

Visit <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/parksandforests/> for infor-

