

By Sarah Petersen

YOU CAN CREATE
FUN FAMILY ACTIVITIES
AT HOME.



PLAY TOGETHER, STAY TOGETHER

The Inside Beach Party

It was the middle of winter, and I was in my beach clothes. My little sister had been planning this for weeks, and it was finally here: the family *inside* beach party! We'd all helped prepare by drawing decorations, hanging lights inside, and covering the floor with beach towels. My dad even joked about putting sunscreen on! We listened to beach music and ate our dinner on the floor. After eating we played our own version of volleyball by tying a string across the room for the "net" while each team tried to blow a feather over the string rather than hitting a ball. Laughing together at the different faces each of us made was the best part of the night. But doing something together as a family—something really fun and different—made it even better.

FAMILY
FUN:

MORE IDEAS

Need some ideas to start your own list of family activities? Try one of these:

FAMILY
TALENT
SHOW

PING-PONG
CRICKET
TENNIS
BADMINTON



ILLUSTRATIONS BY SCOTT GREER

It's shared activities like these—ones that allow family time together regardless of whether it's a planned party or a simple, everyday happening—that help us grow closer to our family members. We know that spending time with our family is important, but not every family gathering can be a planned, themed event. So we need to know how to spend time with our parents and siblings from day to day. You can get to know your siblings much better just by doing little things together, such as talking to them at dinner, sharing your headphones to listen to music together, or helping them with a project. Even if your siblings have different interests, trying out new things together may help you find some common ground.

MUSEUM VISITS

ORIGAMI TUTORIALS

WRITING LETTERS TO EACH OTHER

MAKING FORTS

**KICKBALL
FOUR SQUARE
JUMP ROPE**

FINGER-PAINTING COMPETITIONS

HIKING

KARAOKE NIGHT

TIE-DYE PARTY

FAMILY COOKOUT

TEMPLE TRIPS

READ-A-THONS OR A BOOK CLUB

BIKE RIDES

CHALK MURAL DRAWING

TIC-TAC-TOE CHALLENGE

MAKING PLAY-DOUGH ACTION FIGURES

PAPIER-MÂCHÉ NIGHT

STARGAZING

Favorite Youth Experiences

Check out what these youth enjoy doing with their families.

- Connor and his family love to play board games together, so they have made one night a week a game night for their family.
- Cassandra's family likes to go watch the trains that pass near their house. She loves this time because while they wait for the trains to come, she gets to hear stories from her parents about when they were kids.
- Blythe enjoys participating in her family's annual theater production. They pick a movie or story they're familiar with and then create their own funny version of it, with commercials and other clips to accompany it. This is a time she looks forward to, where they can all laugh and have fun together.
- Ben's family has a tradition for birthdays. Even though most of his siblings are married and have moved away, they all come together to celebrate birthdays. They each say something great about the birthday person. Doing this has become really special to Ben and his family.
- Michaylo loves going on trips with his family because the outings bring his family together. They spend most of their time just laughing and having fun.
- Matt says it doesn't really matter what he is doing with his family, because they always have fun together and love to goof around. Because they have developed this friendship, they have become really close.



Start with What You Already Do

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has said we can create family bonds “through family traditions for birthdays, for holidays, for dinnertime, and for Sundays” (“What Matters Most Is What Lasts Longest,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2005, 43). If your family has a busy schedule, start by working on something you do already, such as dinner, scripture study, or prayer. Help your family be consistent. Then talk to your parents about planning an easy family activity. **NE**

Sarah Petersen lives in Utah, USA.

MORE IDEAS

Need some ideas to start your own list of family activities? Try one of these:

CAMPOUT IN THE BACKYARD OR LIVING ROOM

WATCH AIRPLANES TAKE OFF AND LAND

GARDENING

FRISBEE

PUZZLE PARTY

SUMMER WATER FIGHT

WALKS AT A PARK

PICNICS

HOME MOVIE NIGHT

MAKE SNOW OR SAND SCULPTURES

ROLLER SKATING

FAMILY SLUMBER PARTY

PIE-MAKING NIGHT

LIBRARY VISITS



FAMILY TIME

“Family time is sacred time and should be protected and respected. We urge our members to show devotion to their families.”

President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “And a Little Child Shall Lead Them,” *Ensign*, May 2012, 9.