

NYMetroParents
Presents:

50 Best Ideas for Indoor Fun!!

School breaks, snow days, cold-weather weekends—this time of year presents parents with plenty of opportunities to entertain the kids. Check out our productive (non-destructive), original, TV-free family activities that will keep the kids busy—and happy! A good night's sleep awaits.



Ditch the electronics and spend some family bonding time the old-fashioned way. See page 5 for tips on how to put a fun twist on familiar board games.

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13 Camp-Inspired Ideas

Children love summer camp. While you may never rank quite as high on the “cool scale” as your kid’s counselors, there’s no reason you can’t offer a selection of homemade camp activities that will impress even the most weathered of campers. Here’s a guide to get you started, with input from some inspired directors at day and sleepover camps across the New York metro area.

Pro tips to keep in mind with all activities: tweak things to make them age-appropriate, consider inviting camp friends over to make a mini camp-reunion, and no matter what, remember: the kids are the camp experts—you’re just along for the ride!

By Vanessa Friedman

1. Campout Night

Original Activity: Pitch a tent, sleep under the stars

Winter Substitute: Pitch a bed sheet, sleep in the living room

Camping out is an easy indoor option that kids can do with minimal parental guidance. Becky Newman, summer camp co-director and program manager at EarthPlace in Westport, CT, promises that all children can create their own indoor tent with just a bed sheet and some creativity. Newman suggests creating a starry sky with old coffee cans or oatmeal containers. How? Print constellation templates from the Internet, trace the images onto the bottom of the can, and use a nail or a pencil to poke out the holes. Grab some flashlights, turn off the lights, and shine the light through the can onto the ceiling. Bonus points if your kids make up their own constellations with inspired names.

2. S’more S’mores, Please!

Original Activity: Roast S’mores on an open fire
Winter Substitute: Microwave S’mores next to a flashlight fire

Skip the authentic fire, but don’t skimp on this sweet treat. Have your kids gather scraps of red, orange, and yellow fabric; either buy some felt or cellophane at a craft store, or encourage the use of t-shirts, socks, and other household items. Put out a couple of flashlights and allow each child to create their own “fire,” but have an adult help with the S’mores. Todd Rothman, director of Deerkill Day Camp in Rockland, advises that homemade S’mores can be made in the microwave, over a stove, or with a store-bought S’mores kit. Make enough so the grown-ups can have some too, of course.

3. Camp of Rock

Original Activity: Talent Show in front of whole camp

Winter Substitute: Talent Show at the dinner table

All the directors agree: The camp talent show is the pinnacle of each summer. Karla Schickele, executive director of Willie Mae Rock Camp for Girls in Brooklyn, has an innovative suggestion for an instant performance hit with her classic activity “Instant Song.” Kids brainstorm through a word association exercise, and Schickele explains that before long “pizza” has turned into “hot” which morphs into “summer” and suddenly your song is writing itself. “The point isn’t to write the best song of the century,” Schickele says. “The point is to have fun and be creative.” Once the song is complete, kids can take any instruments—homemade is better!—and play the song through. Be prepared to watch your 4-year-old start pan-banging, spinning, drumming, and more. Enjoy!

4. Search Without Google

Original Activity: Scavenger hunt on the field

Winter Substitute: Scavenger hunt in the attic

While your kids might recall running around camp trying to find the largest scarecrow next to the barn or the oldest canoe at the docks, capitalize on the home environment for this traditional favorite rather than trying to compensate. Attics, basements, even neighboring apartments are perfect scavenging grounds. Bob Polcha, director of Knox School Summer Adventures in Long Island, encourages parents to include a little bit of everything to keep kids interested. Make a quirky list that includes things that are specific to your family to make it personal (Dad's favorite bobblehead, your own childhood doll), and throw in a few "summer memories" to keep the camp mood. Asking your kids to find all the socks they lost at camp last summer is fair game, but don't be surprised when they show up empty-handed.

ARTS & CRAFTS

A&C is one of the quintessential camp activities: Who doesn't love a friendly Pet Rock, or a well intentioned yet unevenly knit scarf? And the best part about these projects is that they can be done any time of year, in any type of weather.

5. Bringing Outside In

Sure, it's disgusting and cold outside, but that's no reason to completely disregard Mother Nature's gifts. Becky Newman, summer camp co-director and program manager at EarthPlace in Westport, CT, suggests picking a non-snowy day to scour your backyard (or the local park) for pine needles, dry sticks, rocks, and any other goodies your little ones can spot. Once you've collected your natural loot you can use them for a variety of art projects: Paint them, cover them with glitter, or simply glue them together. They can be abstract sculptures or paperweights or even trash tomorrow--the what is less important than the fun your child will have creating.

6. Picture This

Remember how adorable you thought it was when your child made you a picture frame at A&C last summer, complete with a photo of the two of you? Why not make a far-away relative's day by creating similar frames for your family? Use construction paper or popsicle sticks for the base, and make sure to crop your photo (either digitally or with old-fashioned scissors) so that it fits in the frame properly.

7. Friends Forever

Nothing says "BFF" like a friendship bracelet. Todd Rothman, director of Deerkill Day Camp in Rockland County, NY points out that while this activity can be done year round, it generally isn't; lanyards and friendship bracelets are traditionally associated with camp. There are hundreds of patterns and stitches out there, so use this as an opportunity for your kids to show off: Ask them to teach you how to do their

favorite stitch they learned last summer, and soon you'll be wearing matching bracelets!

8. Rainbow Explosion

Warning: this last A&C activity is not for the faint of heart. You'll need time, space, buckets, dye, and a lot of parental supervision unless you feel like turning your entire living room multi-colored...can you guess what activity this is? That's right: tie-dye! Rothman call tie-dyeing "one of our traditional arts and crafts events of the summer," explaining its appeal lies in the fact that "you can do it every day and each time you do it, it will come out differently." Is that element of surprise and delight worth the time and energy it will take to bring tie-dyeing into your home? Only you can decide. If you do choose to seize the rainbow, make sure you use buckets you don't mind staining, put newspaper down over the area where you will be dyeing, and be sure to check that the whites your child chooses to dye are articles of clothing that don't need to stay white--the crisp button down Grandma bought as a birthday gift probably shouldn't leave the closet for this activity. Use rubber bands to twist portions of the clothing into chunks, then dunk in the dye buckets and hope for the best! As Rothman says, it will turn out differently each time!

SPORTS

Just because you can't go outside, there's no reason to avoid physical activities. If you have a large basement in your house or a communal fitness room or playroom in your apartment building you can utilize those spaces for indoor active games. If not, these suggestions can still work in small spaces--just be sure to move anything breakable into another room for the duration of the game.

9. Balloon Ball

Jamie Sirkin, owner and director of Summer Trails Camp in Westchester, NY, suggests Blind Volleyball for instant fun on a snowy day. Put a sheet up to divide the space in two, and have kids split up evenly on either side. The players sit down and bounce a balloon (not a ball!) back and forth without being able to see what the opposing team will do next. This game is especially great because it's just as much fun with only two participants, so there's no need to invite the whole neighborhood over!

10. Crab Soccer

Another favorite, says Sirkin, is Crab Soccer. It's exactly what it sounds like--kids play traditional soccer (with either a soccer ball or a softer alternative) but everyone must walk around like a crab. We guarantee your kids know what "crab walk" is, even if you don't!

11. Gaga

A low-impact sport that can be played indoors or outside, Gaga is a fun way to keep a group of children occupied with seemingly zero effort. Rothman praises

Gaga as an activity that poses "very little risk in terms of damage and injuries," and points out that it's a nice chance for your child to take the lead and teach home friends something they learned during the past summer.

MUSIC

Music is the backbone of summer camp memories. Cabin songs, camp songs, bonfire sing-a-longs...the list goes on and on. Simply hum the tune of your child's camp anthem and you're likely to hear a rousing rendition. If you're looking for some more complex musical camp activities though, try these out.

12. Kazoo Orchestra

Lisa Mayer, director of The Clubhouse Camp in NYC, encourages kids and parents to aim to "do one really small thing, but do it for real," when bringing summer camp activities into the home. In this case, the small thing includes a small instrument: Mayer recommends buying a kazoo from a novelty store, gifting it to your child, and then buying a few more for yourself and your child's friends. They shouldn't cost more than a couple of dollars, and once you have doled out the instruments you are ready to become your very own orchestra. Assign one person the harmony, one person the melody, and one person the beat. "You can play Lady Gaga or you can play You Are My Sunshine," says Mayer. "You'd be surprised, kids can really do stuff!"

13. Karaoke

There are tons of ways to perform karaoke in your home, and so many devices you can use to make it happen: an old tape deck, a boom box, iTunes, video games...the list seems endless. If you're feeling particularly old school just encourage your kids to choose songs they know by heart and sing them loudly. Sure, this might fall more into the "sign-a-long" category than the "karaoke" category, but throw in some costume pieces (feather boas, fedoras, and tutus are a good start) and we promise no one will complain.

There are hundreds of ways to adapt camp activities to the home, but the best way to recreate your child's camp experience is to go straight to the source: your kids. Jamie Sirkin, owner and director of Summer Trails Camp in Westchester County, NY, points out that kids will be enthusiastic about sharing their knowledge. "I would rely on the kids to bring the activities home," Sirkin says. "Ask your children: What were your favorite things about camp? How can we adapt them?" Step out of your usual role as "planner" for this one. "It's very empowering for children to share their camp experiences," Sirkin says. Let your kids shine as they show you how they have fun when you're not around, and before long, the sun will be out--just in time for real camp to begin.

23 More Boredom Busters

14. *Egg Hunt*

Your family probably has plastic Easter eggs tucked in storage, just waiting for spring. Why not break them out now? Fill the eggs with treats you'll find on your kitchen shelves (goldfish crackers, raisins, M&Ms, coins, etc.). Take turns hiding some of the eggs around the house, and then let everyone else go on the hunt. When all the eggs have been hidden and found, it's time to dig into the treats inside.

15. *Mid-Day Sleepover*

You don't have to wait for the sun to go down to gather your family for a sleepover party. Assemble all the essentials, including a movie, sleeping bags, pillows, and snacks. It's a great break for everyone, at almost any time of the year.

16. *Make Dinner*

This can be a lot more fun than you might think. If your kids like to help out in the kitchen, break out the crockpot and a favorite recipe and get to work. You'll find many simple dishes that can be completed almost entirely by kids (with adult supervision). They'll get to measure, mix, and even spice up the feast just the way they like it. Go to nymetroparents.com/kids-cook for tips and recipes.

17. *Flashlight Hunt*

If it's getting dark early, take advantage of the sunset by holding a treasure hunt with a twist. Hide a few special treats (it really doesn't matter what's hidden—the fun is in the searching), turn off the lights, and arm everyone with a flashlight for hunting. The winner gets to reveal the hidden surprise and then share it with everyone. (For more ideas on ways to use flashlights—and create an indoor camp setting—check out our list at nymetroparents.com/camp-inside.)

18. *Your Family Onscreen*

You don't need to go to the video store to watch your favorite "actors." Pull out those old home videos of when you or your kids were born, first birthday celebrations, and vacations and sit down for an amazing show. It's lots of fun to see yourself, and your family, when everyone was so much younger. It will bring back great memories for everyone—and garner a few laughs.

19. *Long, Hot Bath*

If your kids love playing in the tub but never get enough time for it before bed, here's their chance to dawdle. Try out a daytime bubble bath that can last well beyond the pruney-finger stage. If you're feeling creative, try combining clear dish soap with a bit of washable paint. They'll be able to finger-paint in the tub!

20. *Dance Party*

Do your kids have a favorite CD, or a playlist with some great music? Just start it up and get dancing. Double the fun by having children and parents dance together. Try out all your new dance moves as you stretch your creativity, and your body, at the same time.

21. *Book Making*

That's right, kids can become published authors in one afternoon just by exercising some imagination. Gather a few sheets of 8.5 x 11-inch paper and one sheet of construction paper for the cover. Have them fold all the paper in half and they're ready to create their own book. Once the story is written, kids can add pictures, stamps, or whatever decoration they choose. As these homemade books collect over the years, you'll have your own little library of fun. (They also make great gifts for grandparents.)



Here are some of the most popular indoor activities from the National Center for Family Literacy's new educational website, Wonderopolis.org, which features a novel "Wonder of the Day" daily for parents to explore with children:

22. *Let It Snow*

Whether you live in a warm or cold climate, almost all children are fascinated by snow. With the help of some pipe cleaners and a few other simple supplies, you and your kids can learn how to make your own ice crystals in a jar.

23. *Do-it-Yourself Aromatherapy*

Recycling takes on a fun twist when you help your kids turn old wax crayons and empty soup cans into homemade candles. Add some scented oil or a few drops of vanilla extract to create a calming atmosphere in your home. Just make sure to never leave a lit candle unattended or in reach of small children.

24. *Create Virtual Biographies*

Are your kids fascinated with a historical legend like King Tut or a children's author like J.K. Rowling? If so, have them create a modern-day biography by researching them online. Then have some real fun by asking your children to imagine what it would be like to be Facebook friends with that person. What would his profile look like? What would she talk about? Would Jacques Cousteau like *Jaws* or *Titanic*?

25. *Stargazing*

Not many people live far enough north to view the beauty of the northern lights. Even if you do, artificial light and inclement weather can make stargazing difficult. But the AuroraMAX Observatory in Yellowknife, Canada, conveniently broadcasts live video via Webcam every night, allowing viewers all over the world to experience the beauty of aurora borealis firsthand.

26. *Plan a staycation.*

Is the economy putting a crimp in your normal travel plans this year? Check out the Wonder of the Day titled "What Would You Do on a Staycation?" to get ideas on how to get your kids excited about not going away for vacation. A basement camping trip can be just as fun as an authentic camping trip, while still enjoying the luxuries of home.

27. Tweak a familiar board game.

Board games are lots of fun, but putting a crazy twist on a popular game creates a unique family experience that becomes an inside joke. Instead of traditional checkers, play a game where the goal is for players to get rid of checkers, not accumulate them! Or challenge Pictionary artists to draw for their teammates blindfolded!

28. Put on a family talent show.

Juggle scarves, tell jokes, do a few tricks with the family pet, or show off some Hula-hoop tricks. Everyone has a little talent!

29. Bake cookies and then deliver them to the fire department.

Kids love to “help” in the kitchen and you’ll feel good about teaching them a lesson in community service. (As an added bonus, they might be offered a tour of the fire station!)

30. Tell stories...but add a challenging twist:

Each person takes a turn grouping 10 objects on a table and then choosing someone to make up a story that includes all 10 objects. When the tale is over, the storyteller can put 10 different objects on the table and choose the next storyteller.

31. Play Would You Rather...?

Kids love to choose between two bizarre options—and you’ll get addicted to this game too. Would you rather investigate scary noises in the attic by yourself or sleep outside in a sleeping bag alone? (The best thing about this game: No props required.) Caution: This should be played under adult supervision only.

32. Read, then feed.

Read a book aloud with a companion cookbook and then follow one of the recipes together! If your kids would enjoy listening to *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, select an accompanying recipe from *Roald Dahl’s Revolting Recipes*. If your kids are fans of the Little House series, check out *The Little House Cookbook*.

33. Have a puzzle race.

If your gang thinks jigsaw puzzles are a bit tame, try this zany twist. Each member of the family chooses a puzzle. Dump all of the puzzle pieces into a pile, mix them up, then...BEGIN! Who can find all the right pieces and finish his or her puzzle first?

34. Send the kids on a Missing Pieces Scavenger Hunt.

Take something apart (a puzzle, a jointed skeleton...) and hide the pieces around the house. Tell the kids to work together to find all of the pieces and put the item back together again.

35. Make your own Mad Libs.

Mad Libs are funny enough on their own, but when you take the time to create personal stories for your own family, you’ll never stop laughing. Study a few Mad Libs to see how they’re written, then come up with your own unique stories and have your family members fill in the blanks.

36. Have an impromptu Family Olympics.

See who can make the paper airplane that flies the farthest. Give everyone a piece of bubble gum and find out who can make the largest bubble. See who can make the most “baskets” using rolled up socks and an empty wastebasket. Who will walk away with the gold medal?



Bubbles, water toys, and washable paint—even a sibling—can make a midday bath a fun way to spend some time.

Hey, Kids!

Make a list of your favorite ideas from this story, and add in some of your tried-and-true indoor past-times. Once you run through these ideas, simply start back at the beginning for a replay of the fun. Be sure to use your own creativity to add a few twists to these ideas, or even combine them for wackier projects. Before long you’ll have a new list of custom-made boredom-busters, created by you!

Stock Up:

7 Things to Have on Hand for Fun at Your Fingertips

DIY KIDS' ROOMS



37. Doodle Duvet Cover

How awesome is this? A duvet cover that looks like a piece of notebook paper, just begging to be filled with your child's thoughts or poems, doodles or masterpieces. The cover (available in single and double bed size) comes with an 8-pack of colorful, washable pens, so your little one can scribble to her heart's content then start all over again with a clean slate. \$76.37; notonthehighstreet.com. Also available: Doodle Pillowcase (\$27).

38. Burgerplex Colour-In Wallpaper

You spotted it—that extra u smuggled into the word color means this wallpaper hails from the UK. But no worries! Burgerplex ships internationally. Good thing, because this color-able wallpaper is just about irresistible. Simply stick it up and let your budding Picasso color in the cartoon design with markers or paint (not included). The wallpaper comes in two designs: Burgerdoodles (pictured), which is full of funky characters, and Burger Mash, which is a bit more abstract. £35 (about \$57); burgerplex.com.



Other interactive wallpapers we like:

Graham and Brown Frames Wallpaper (\$45); designpublic.com/shop/graham-and-brown/11558

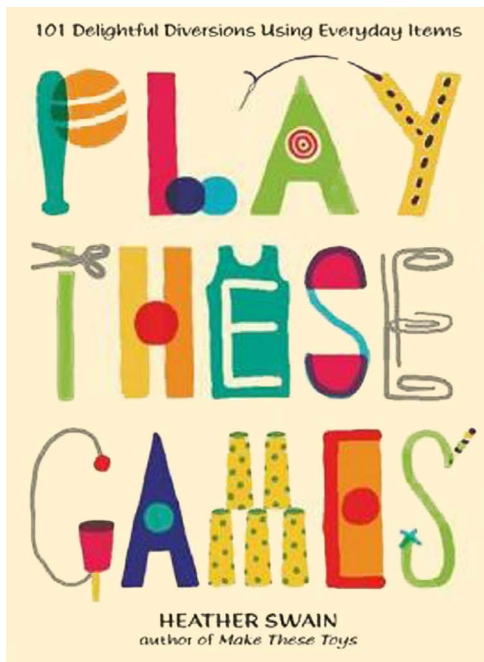
Magnetic Woodlands Wallpaper (£278 or about \$400) sianzeng.bigcartel.com/product/magnetic-woodlands-wallpaper-brown-pink

39. Benjamin Moore Chalkboard Paint

Chalkboard paint applies just like any other paint, but it turns a surface into a canvas of endless opportunities. Paint a whole wall of your child's room and let him loose, or just use it to jazz up his dresser. This quick-drying, washable paint comes in every color (3,400 to choose from) and sells for \$19.99 per quart. Search for a store near you at benjaminmoore.com and get more ideas on how and where to use chalkboard paint on the product's Pinterest page.



BOOKS TO FEND OFF CABIN FEVER

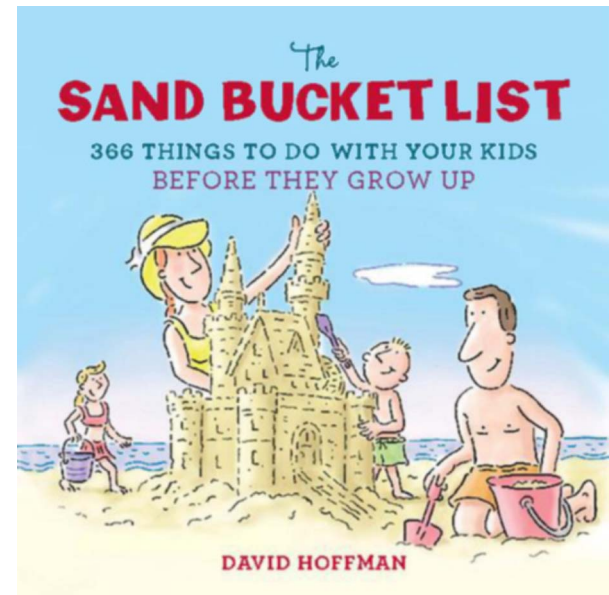
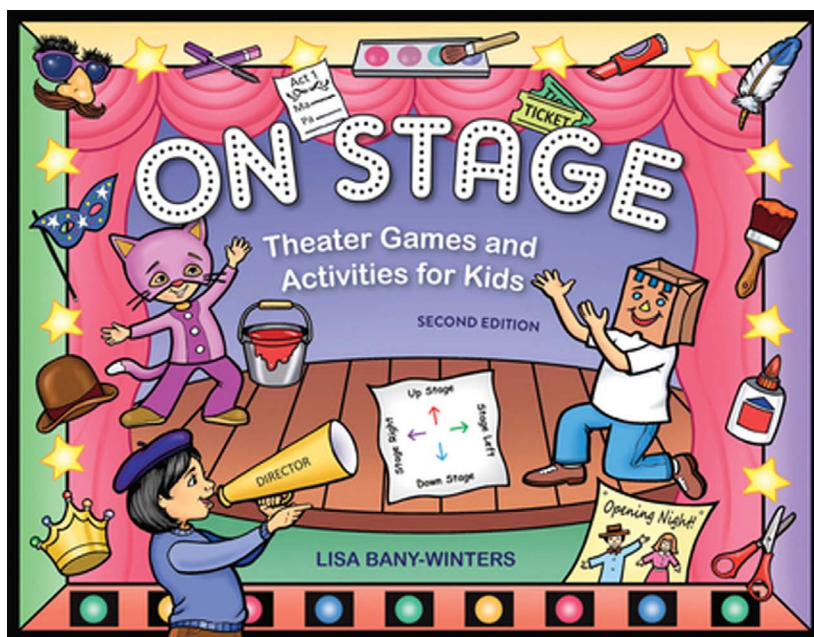


40. Not-So-Ordinary Household Items

Cure boredom and turn everyday objects into a vehicle for inspiring children during playtime. A Brooklyn mother of two, former third-grade teacher, and an award-winning author, Heather Swain offers 101 games that anyone can create with simple household items in *Play These Games* (Perigee Books; \$14). Take turns stacking different-sized plastic or paper cups to build a Leaning Tower of Cupsa, use buttons and masking tape to create a simple board game, or compete in a match of balloon tennis.

41. Action!

Transform your living room into a stage with short scripts and story ideas from *On Stage: Theater Games and Activities for Kids* (Chicago Review Press; \$16.95). Created by Lisa Bany-Winters, the cofounder of educational theater company "Play On" who is also on the faculty of Chicago's renowned "Second City," the 200-page book for kids ages 7-12 covers topics like improvisation, character development, and scenes and monologues for kids to act out. Plus, it teaches simple stage-makeup techniques and basic theater terms.

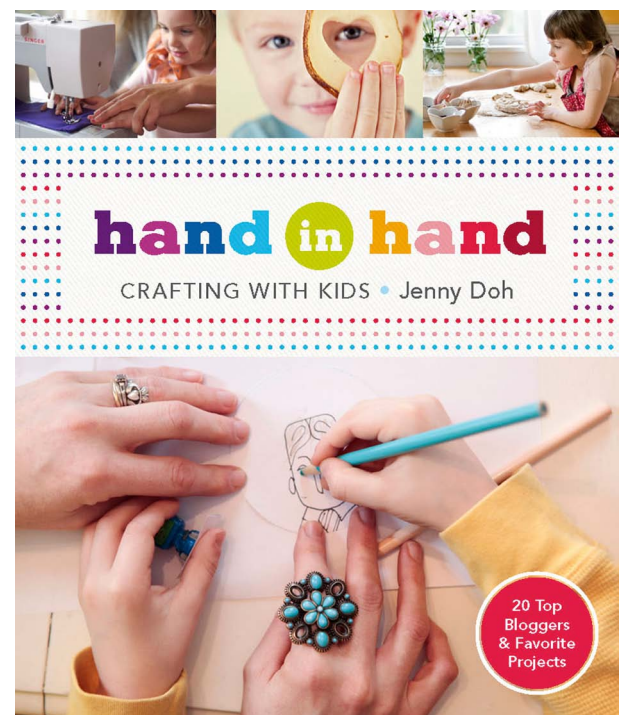


42. Family Bucket List

Did you know there are 940 Saturdays from the time your child is born to the time she is 18 years old? Take a cue from writer David Hoffman's book *The Sand Bucket List: 366 Things to Do with Your Kids Before They Grow Up* (Running Press; \$12.99) and make the most of family time. From the spontaneous (ice-skate down a city street that has frozen over) to the silly (use a pogo stick as a means of transportation) and more elaborate (ride an ostrich), this 127-page hardcover is full of one-sentence suggestions that will help you create lasting memories with your family. Sure to be one of your children's favorites: Let them plan the dinner menu, even if every course involves chocolate!

43. Project Creativity

"The word 'creativity' often gets pigeonholed as activities pertaining to the arts, but every child is creative in one way or another," writes one mom blogger in *Hand in Hand: Crafting with Kids* by Jenny Doh (Lark Crafts; \$19.95). Photo-rich with simple step-by-step instructions, this 160-page book features 20 parent bloggers who share the projects they use to spark their children's imaginations. One awesome creation is a motion toy from yesteryear, the thaumatrope—a stick with two images on opposite sides that seem to merge when twirled.



Hit the Lanes!

NEW YORK CITY

Brooklyn

Brooklyn Bowl
61 Wythe Avenue
(718) 963-3369
brooklynbowl.com

Lane 8 Bowling - Brookwood BBQ Fort Hamilton FMWR
124 Wainwright Street
(718) 630-4229
hamiltonmwr.com

Maple Lanes
1570 60th Street
(718) 331-9000
bowlmaple.com

Melody Lanes
461 37th Street
(718) 499-3848
melodylanesny.com

Shell Lanes
1 Bouck Court
(718) 336-6700
shelllanes.com

Strike 10 Lanes
(formerly Gil Hodges Lanes)
6161 Strickland Avenue
(718) 763-6800
strike10lanes.com

Manhattan

300 New York
Pier 60, 23rd Street and Twelfth Avenue, Chelsea
(212) 835-2695; threehundred.com

Bowlmor Lanes
110 University Place, Union Square
(212) 255-8188
222 West 44th Street, Midtown
(212) 680-0012
bowlmor.com

Frames Bowling Lounge
625 Eighth Avenue, Midtown
(212) 268-6909; framesnyc.com



Harlem Lanes
2116 Adam Clayton Powell Boulevard, Harlem
(212) 678-2695; harlemlanes.com

Lucky Strike Lanes
624-660 W. 42nd Street, Midtown
(646) 829-0170
bowlluckystrike.com

Queens

AMF 34th Avenue Bowl
69-10 34th Avenue, Woodside
(718) 651-0440
amf.com/34thavenuelanes

Astoria Bowl
19-45 49th Street, Astoria
(718) 274-1910
astoriabowl.com

Cozy Bowl
98-18 Rockaway Boulevard
Ozone Park
(718) 843-5553

JIB Lanes
67-19 Parsons Boulevard, Flushing
(718) 591-0600; jiblanes.com

Whitestone Lanes
30-05 Whitestone Expressway
Whitestone
(718) 353-6300
whitestonebowling.com

LONG ISLAND

Nassau County

AMF Bowling
Various locations
(800) 342-5263
amf.com

Baldwin Bowling Center
2407 Grand Avenue, Baldwin
(516) 223-8980
baldwinbowl.com

Coram Country Lanes
615 Middle Country Road, Coram
(631) 732-2022
coramcountrylanes.com

Cove Lanes
200 Carney Street, Glen Cove
(516) 671-0028
covelanes.com

Dani's Strike Zone
20 Village Avenue, Elmont
(516) 328-2695
danisstrikezone.com

Herrill Lanes
465 Herricks Road, New Hyde Park
(516) 741-8022
herrillanes.com

Massapequa Bowl
4235 Merrick Road, Massapequa
(516) 541-8000
massapequabowl.com

RVC Lanes
100 Maple Avenue
Rockville Centre
(516) 678-3010
rvclanes.net

San-Dee Lanes of Malverne
342 Hempstead Avenue, Malverne
(516) 599-1134; sandeelanes.com

South Levittown Lanes
56 Tanners Lanes, Levittown
(516) 731-5700
levittownbowling.com

Woodmere Lanes
948 Broadway, Woodmere
(516) 374-9870
woodmerelanes.com

Suffolk County

300 Long Island
895 Walt Whitman Road, Melville
(631) 271-1180
threehundred.com

AMF Bowling
Various locations
amf.com

Bowl Long Island at Patchogue
138 West Avenue, Patchogue
(631) 475-5164
bowlongisland.com

Coram Country Lanes
615 Middle Country Road, Coram
(631) 732-2022
coramcountrylanes.com

Deer Park Bowl
849 Long Island Avenue, Deer Park
(631) 667-7750
deerparkbowl.com

East Hampton Bowling
66 Cooper Lane, East Hampton
(631) 324-1950; ehbowl.com

East Islip Lanes
117 East Main Street, East Islip
(631) 581-6200; eilanes.com

Farmingdale Lanes
999 Conklin Street, Farmingdale
(631) 249-4300
farmingdalelanes.com

Larkfield Lanes
332 Larkfield Road, East Northport
(631) 368-8788
larkfieldlanes.com

Polish Hall of Riverhead
214 Marcy Avenue, Riverhead
(631) 727-9200
riverheadpolishhall.com

Port Jeff Bowl
31 Chereb Lane
Port Jefferson Station
(631) 473-3300; portjeffbowl.com

Wildwood Bowling Center
3951 Lake Road, Riverhead
(631) 727-6622

SUBURBS

Fairfield County, CT

Andor Greenwich Lines
1 American Lane
Greenwich
(203) 869-0714

Barnum Recreation Duckpin Bowling
1465 Barnum Avenue
Stratford
(203) 375-0621

Brookfield Lanes
840 Federal Road
Brookfield
(203) 755-4343
brookfieldlanesct.com

Danbury Duck Pin Lanes
7 East Hayestown Road
Danbury
(203) 744-4504

Nutmeg Bowl
802 Villa Avenue, Fairfield
(203) 367-7741
nutmegbowl.com

AMF Rip Van Winkle Lanes
701 Connecticut Avenue, Norwalk
(203) 838-7501
amf.com/ripvanwinklelanes

Sports Center of Connecticut
784 River Road, Shelton
(203) 929-6500
sportscenterct.com

Rockland County, NY

Hi-Tor Lanes
40 South Route 9W, West
Haverstraw
(845) 429-8000; hitorlanes.com

Lucky Strike Lanes
4662 Palisades Center Drive
West Nyack
(845) 358-1602
bowlluckystrike.com

New City Bowl and Batting Cages
90 North Main Street
New City
(845) 634-4977
newcitybowlandbattingcages.com

Pearl River Lanes
100 N. Middletown Road
Pearl River
(845) 735-8400
pearlriverlanes.com

Westchester County, NY

AMF White Plains Lanes
47 Tarrytown Road, White Plains
(914) 948-2677
amf.com/whiteplainslanes

Cortlandt Lanes
2192 Crompond Road
Cortland Manor
(914) 737-4550
cortlandtlanes.com

Homefield Bowl
938 Saw Mill River Road, Yonkers
(914) 969-5592
homefieldbowl.com

Jefferson Valley Bowl
3699 Hill Boulevard
Jefferson Valley
(914) 245-7770
jeffersonvalleylanes.com

New Roc 'N Bowl
19 LeCourt Place, New Rochelle
(914) 636-3700
funfuziononline.com

Paradise Lanes
790 Yonkers Avenue, Yonkers
(914) 969-2417
paradiselanesbowling.net

Spins Bowl
333 North Bedford Road
Mount Kisco
(914) 241-3131
spinsbowl.com

45. Search NYMetroParents
Where-To Guides Online

Children's museums, indoor ice-skating rinks, indoor amusement parks and more fit the bill for indoor fun. Visit nymetroparents.com/where-to



»»The Magic of Math

By Kaitlin Ahern

Opened Dec. 15, the newest addition to Manhattan's already impressive museum collection is the only one of its kind in the country.

Recently, the Big Apple made history by opening the doors to the Museum of Mathematics, the only math museum in the United States. What's even more impressive, though, is the way the museum is shattering a prejudice that's held on through generations: Think math is boring? Think again!

This specialized museum also comes at an opportune time, when our country is more focused than ever on STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) education. While we've fallen behind other countries in this field, the careers it offers are in demand and expanding quickly, offering a bright future to kids who favor STEM.

The Museum of Mathematics, or MoMath for short, proves to kids (and grown-ups, for that matter) that math is way cooler than it gets credit for being. Its mission is to "enhance public understanding and perception of mathematics in daily life," but its methods are dynamic, interactive, and—dare we say it—just plain fun.

The museum's more than 40 exhibits and activities appeal to kids' natural curiosity about the world and offer visitors of all ages new and novel ways to experience math. Within its 20,000 square feet you'll find exhibits such as Feedback Fractals, which uses ordinary video cameras to produce intricate, infinitely repeating patterns, and Wall of Fire, where visitors interact with a room-high plane of laser light to discover the hidden shapes lurking in everyday objects.

You might recognize some of MoMath's exhibits, as the inspiration for the museum came from a traveling exhibit called Math Midway that visited several area museums over the past three years. Creator Glen Whitney, a hedge fund manager turned mathematics advocate, says the overwhelmingly positive response to Math Midway convinced him and his team that they were on to something. "There

is nothing in the world that hasn't been improved by math," says Whitney, who serves as MoMath's executive director. "Math is fun, beautiful, and important to getting a really good job in today's world. MoMath showcases the truly vast mathematical landscape and will take visitors on a numerical journey through the everyday world, providing vivid experiences that will leave them more aware of their mathematical surroundings."

Details

Address: 11 E. 26th St., Murray Hill

Directions: Accessible via the N, R subway line (28th Street stop), the 6 line (28th Street stop), and the F, M line (23rd Street stop)

Hours: 10am-5pm daily, including New Year's Day

Admission: Online purchase: \$15; \$9 seniors, students, and children ages 2-12; free for children younger than 2 (Note: Tickets purchased at the door have a \$1 surcharge)

For more information: 212-542-0566; momath.org

1 This rendering of MoMath's upper level shows an educational environment that feels more like an amusement park than a classroom.

2 Choose an equation and see it illuminated in the two-story-high String Product exhibit in MoMath's central staircase.

3 The Pedal on the Petals exhibit, in which visitors ride a square-wheeled tricycle around a sunflower-shaped track, is a favorite that the MoMath team carried over from its original traveling exhibit, Math Midway, which inspired the creation of the museum.

4 MoMath founder and executive director Glen Whitney tests out the Coaster Rollers exhibit, where visitors can propel themselves along a track filled with oddly shaped objects.

5 The Enigma Café serves up family fare as well as another opportunity for mathematical discovery: There are digital puzzles at each table.

6 MoMath's exhibits are designed by Tim Nissen, who previously served as associate director of exhibition design at the American Museum of Natural History.



All photos courtesy Museum of Mathematics

47. Find More Nearby Indoor Attractions

If you've exhausted all the indoor options listed so far (or just need to cure your case of cabin-fever), browse the array of venues at nymetroparents.com/outings for all the info you'll need to decide if a mini-road trip is worth it. Some you'll find: Katonah Museum of Art, New York Hall of Science, and the Maritime Aquarium at Norwalk.



48. Cook Up Something Savory

Vegetarian Chili

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- ½ medium onion, chopped
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 2 tablespoons dried oregano
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 2 stalks celery, chopped
- 2 green bell peppers, chopped
- 2 jalapeno peppers, chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, chopped
- 2 (4 oz.) cans chopped green chile peppers, drained
- 2 (12 oz.) packages vegetarian burger crumbles
- 3 (28 oz.) cans whole peeled tomatoes, crushed
- ¼ cup chili powder
- 1 tablespoon ground black pepper
- 1 (15 oz.) can kidney beans, drained
- 1 (15 oz.) can garbanzo beans, drained
- 1 (15 oz.) can black beans
- 1 (15 oz.) can whole kernel corn

Servings: 8

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 1 hour

Directions

1. Heat the olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Stir in the onion, and season with bay leaves, cumin, oregano, and salt. Cook and stir until onion is tender, then mix in the celery, green bell peppers, jalapeno peppers, garlic, and green chile peppers. When vegetables are heated through, mix in the vegetarian burger crumbles. Reduce heat to low, cover pot, and simmer 5 minutes.

2. Mix the tomatoes into the pot. Season chili with chili powder and pepper. Stir in the kidney beans, garbanzo beans, and black beans. Bring to a boil, reduce heat to low, and simmer 45 minutes. Stir in the corn, and continue cooking 5 minutes before serving.



49. Whip Up Something Sweet

Berry Breakfast Smoothie

Blend 1 cup mixed berries (fresh or frozen),
¼ cup milk,
kefir or almond milk,
2 tbsp. peanut butter,
and ¼ tsp. vanilla extract.



50. Check Your Inbox!



Okay, logging into your email might not be the most exciting indoor activity you do today, but it will certainly be the most rewarding: If you've shared your email address with us, you'll now receive the NYMetroParents weekly family activities newsletter with our calendar editors' top picks for kid-friendly events right near where you live! Enjoy, and remember—if you like it, make sure to forward it on to your friends!

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