

Take It Outside!

With so much technology, it can be hard to pull ourselves away from indoor attractions like computers, TVs, and video games. As a result, we miss out on the exciting and beautiful world of nature that is right outside our door. Spending time in nature alone and with our families has positive outcomes for everyone.

Did you know that experts have found that kids who have greater contact with nature are happier, healthier, smarter, more creative, more optimistic, more focused, and more self-confident? Families also have stronger bonds and get along better if they participate in activities outside. Getting outside can even help prevent diabetes, behavioral disorders, and depression. So, no matter how tempting staying inside may be, making time for nature is really important!



Tips to get kids involved:

- Make a list of nature activities that your kids want to do and then use those activities as rewards
- Encourage kids to go outside with you while you do yard work
- Help kids plant a garden that they can take care of
- Check out books on local animals, like birds, and help your kids pick them out
- Get other friends and families involved in your nature outings too – the more, the merrier!

Here are some fun, family-friendly outdoor activities you can try:

- Go apple or berry picking
- Follow animal tracks
- Go sledding
- Sleep in the backyard
- Go fishing
- Jump in puddles
- Go stargazing and pick out your favorite constellations
- Plant a vegetable garden
- Go for a hike or nature walk
- Collect seashells on the beach

Resources:

- Children and Nature Network | <http://www.childrenandnature.org/>
- Let's Go! | <http://www.letsgo.org/>
- Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands | <http://www.parksandland.com>
- Healthy Maine Walks | <http://www.healthymainewalks.org/>

