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No cost or low cost holiday entertainment

Below is a list of fun activities that you can do with your children over the holiday period. This list is by no means exhaustive and has been put together as a result of conversations, internet browsing and past experiences by Brenda Holdaway, Whanau Facilitator. As with any activity, set some rules around it, if you haven’t already, and remind them of the rules. Enjoy and feel free to alter any of the ideas to make them work for your family.

In the community:

* Go for a walk – centre of New Zealand, local parks, beaches, boulder bank, brook sanctuary, Grampians, Rabbit Island, Richmond ranges, National Parks. Get kids to help make the picnic.
* Go to the library – let them choose 5 books to take home and 3 to read there. Go back again in a few days’ time to exchange the books for new ones. There may even be activities on at the library for them to do.
* Go to the museum – Nelson Provincial, Isel House, and Broad green house.
* Go to the beach – have sand castle competition, or all work together to see how high you can build a castle, or make a moat and make sure you keep water in it. Use natural resources to help make sand castles. Have fun washing off in the water afterwards.
* Go to the river for a swim, build stone castles (sand castle with stones/rocks) have competitions to see who can build the highest, largest, etc.
* Go to the park and let them climb trees, play hide and seek, hunt for treasure.
* Go on a rainbow scavenger hunt – they have to find something of each colour of the rainbow.
* Climb the Grampians or Centre of New Zealand and make a day of it by a taking picnic and add some different exploring things into it – listening to birds, looking for different coloured objects, different sized things, other natural items.

In the home:

* Make a hut/tent using blankets/sheets and household furniture (table, sofa, etc.) let the children use it to have their lunch, read stories, sleep.
* Set up a tea party, if you haven’t got a children’s tea set then use plastic picnic cups or real cups. Let them have water and some food of some sort.
* Baking for the tea party. Icing biscuits can take a long time.
* Painting with water inside and out – paint brush – large or small and a bucket or tin of water. Paint names, letters, numbers, pictures and watch it dry.
* Work in the garden, let them have their own little plot of garden and support them to prepare it for planting, then plant their seeds and water them and watch them grow.
* Build their own sand tray/garden. Let them collect things from the garden and make their own little picture by filling a flat tray with sand and decorating it with the things they have collected.
* Make swords out of rolled up newspaper and let them have challenges/fights– (remember to set rules around this).
* Rolled up magazines or newspapers make great bats for hitting balls with.
* Hang a ball inside a stocking from a branch or doorway and the child has to hit it (like swingball).
* Fill up plastic bottles with water or dirt and put their lids back on them, then use them as skittles with a ball.
* Use some balloons instead of balls for activities.
* Set up a clothesline at the right height for children and let them do the washing.
* Do some body painting – give them small paint brushes and let them do it outside or in the bath and give them diluted food colouring or paint so they can paint their sibling. Make it in to a competition.
* Play board games or card games.
* Make play dough
* Make their own games – either board games or matching games by using old magazines or images off the computer.
* Make a creation out of newspaper – give the children a stack of newspaper and a roll of sellotape. They have to make the tallest creation they can by only using the newspaper and sellotape.
* Make a dress up costume by going through the recycling box. Allow them to have needle and thread or sellotape.
* Play pretend restaurants – let them create dishes with mud and things from the garden, set up the restaurant and get them to take your order and prepare the food etc. could even involve pretend money which they need to make.
* Paper plane making and then competition – show then via U Tube how to make a paper plan then give them paper from recycling bin and they have to make 10 and fly each one and whose flies the furthest, wins (the prize is they don’t have to help with dishes that night.
* Play hide and seek and they aren’t allowed to hide in same place each time.
* Make a kite and then fly it.
* Set up a treasure hunt around home. Either do it like a treasure trail with clues at each spot leading them to the next spot, or with so many things hidden around the house and garden and they have to find them. Make some really hard to keep them really busy.

Websites with more ideas:

* [www.kiwifamilies.co.nz](http://www.kiwifamilies.co.nz)
* [www.parent.com](http://www.parent.com)
* Pinterest
* [www.realsimple.com](http://www.realsimple.com)
* [www.littledailyplanner.com](http://www.littledailyplanner.com)
* [www.familyeguide.com](http://www.familyeguide.com)
* [www.kidspot.co.nz](http://www.kidspot.co.nz)

To keep the excitement going all holidays, write one activity on a piece of paper then cut them all up and put them in a jar/container. Each day a child gets to pull out one piece of paper and that activity is what you do that day. You can put the activity back in the jar so it can be used another day as well. Or you can create a calendar and get the children to choose an activity for each day and write it up – your holiday is all planned.

All activities require rules and adult input, so it is important that you are supporting your children with the activity so you can remind them of the rules. The purpose of rules is so that everyone is safe and the game is fair for all. Talk about the rules before you start so everyone is clear on them.

Enjoy and have fun!