

School Holiday Parent Kit

ACTIVITIES

Finding new things to do at home or getting out of the house are great ways to keep the kids entertained, and reduce your stress.

Here are some ideas and information that give you inspiration when the kids say those dreaded words: "I'm bored."

IN YOUR OWN BACKYARD

Encourage children away from inactive video games and the TV with physically active games that improve their coordination, balancing and movement skills. This will also build their confidence and self-esteem.

These need not be complicated and require only minimal resources: Suggest some of the following activities to your children:

- flying a kite
- helping in the garden – maybe your child could have part of the garden as their own

REMEMBER

Having fun is the main priority – make physical activities even more fun by getting out into the backyard and playing games with kids.

- helping to organise a family barbeque or picnic
- practising skills like soccer, catching, throwing, skipping or hitting a ball against a wall
- playing with the family pet
- helping to organise a garage sale
- making an obstacle course and competing with their friends, siblings and you.

IN YOUR OWN HOME

In case of bad weather conditions, such as high temperatures, it is a good idea to brainstorm a range of fun indoor activities for your children. It is best to get in early and have a list prepared, that might include some of the following:

- having a cooking day
- artwork, drawing or painting
- listening to music and dancing
- playing board games
- writing stories and poems
- researching something the children are interested in
- making up their own play and performing it for you and the rest of the family.

HOLIDAY DRAMAS

See a local theatre production. Many local theatrical societies often put on a Christmas holiday pantomime – check local newspapers or shopping centre flyers for details.

HOLIDAY FUN @ YOUR LIBRARY

Public libraries are not what they used to be. In addition to being a great place to pick up some free holiday reading, libraries offer school holiday activities such as story-telling, rock bands, courses and children's short films. There's something for everyone. Contact your local library for details.

GET WEB WISE AT YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY

The Internet is a great source of information – and the best news is that you don't need a home computer to access it. Public libraries also have Internet access, so why not check out some of the sites listed on this fact sheet?

SUMMER HOLIDAY CAMPS AND ACTIVITIES

Canoeing, surfing, sailing and cricket are just some of the outdoor activities on offer at NSW Sport and Recreation this summer.

Activity session times vary from a few hours to a whole day to cater for school-aged children and teenagers.

Kids can also get active with time away at a holiday camp. Ideal for primary and high-school aged kids, the three-to-five day camps include a range of fun-filled sleep-over activities.

Camps cater for young people going alone or with friends and are a great opportunity for them to boost self-esteem by trying a new sport, learning living skills and meeting new friends. Activities are conducted by appropriately qualified and experienced staff.

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NSW Department of
Community Services



A NSW Government Initiative

All meals, accommodation and activities are included. If you are eligible for a child care benefit, NSW sport and recreation centres are registered child care providers.

A range of affordable active family getaways are also available.

Call 13 13 02 or visit www.dsr.nsw.gov.au for details.

PCYCs

There are a range of activities on offer this summer at the Police and Community Youth Clubs (PCYC). Most of the 59 clubs around NSW offer a range of holiday programs and activities. PCYCs also offer space where school-aged children can come and hang out with their friends, play pool or watch television, in a safe environment.

For more information on where your local PCYC is and the activities they are offering this summer, please visit the website: www.pcy NSW.org or call PCYC State Office on (02) 9625 9111.

YMCA

This summer the YMCA has something for everyone at various locations across Sydney and NSW. For the adventurous, there are summer camps offering everything from abseiling and high ropes to canoeing, bushcraft and more.

YMCA Centres offer a range of in-centre activities including sports, arts and craft and gymnastics. YMCAs also offer a huge range of excursions including visits to the zoo, movies, bowling and ice skating.

Most YMCA Centres offer all day care from 7am - 6pm and are eligible for the Child Care Benefit. For more information visit www.ymcasydney.org or phone (02) 9687 6233.

DISCOVER A NATIONAL PARK

The NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service conducts a variety of school holiday Discovery walks, talks and tours around the State.

The activities are led by specialist Discovery Rangers and are not only great fun, they offer new insights into the environment and the history that shaped it.

Prices vary from \$3 per child. Family discounts are available. Bookings are essential. Telephone 1300 361 967, contact your local NPWS Office for details or visit their website at www.environment.nsw.gov.au.

PLAY TOURIST

To find out about where to go and what to see and do in NSW, go to the Tourism New South Wales website at www.visitnsw.com or call 13 20 77. Search online for the best events, accommodation and attractions to suit your family's interests and budget. Don't forget to check regularly as the site is updated with great holiday deals and news. For information on local museums, galleries and other attractions in regional NSW, drop in to the various Visitor Information Centres throughout the State.

EXPLORE SYDNEY IN SUMMER

Take advantage of living in or visiting a city with so much to see and do over the school holidays. Walk across the Harbour Bridge, and even up one of the pylons, for fantastic views of the harbour and city. Visit the Sydney Observatory to learn about the stars and planets in our hemisphere. Pack your bikes and a picnic for a day of fun at Centennial Park. Explore the harbour foreshore when you follow the Spit to Manly walking trail or discover fantastic views along the cliff walk from Coogee to Bondi. There are some great events that are free too. The Sydney Festival hosts a number of family-friendly outdoor

events, including concerts in the Domain and Parramatta Park in January. Bring a blanket and enjoy watching the latest movies in The Overflow at Sydney Olympic Park in January or visit The Rocks on Australia Day for a free country music festival.

Find out more about some of Sydney's star attractions

Powerhouse Museum
Phone: (02) 9217 0111
www.powerhousemuseum.com

Darling Harbour
www.darlingharbour.com

Taronga Zoo
Phone: (02) 9969 2777
www.zoo.nsw.gov.au

Sydney Olympic Park
Phone: (02) 9714 7888
www.sydneolympicpark.com.au

The Rocks
www.therocks.com

COUNCIL HOLIDAY (VACATION) CARE CENTRES

Many local councils and community groups conduct daycare (vacation care) programs with activities for school-aged children. Contact your local council or Network of Community Activities for more information.

Child care subsidies are available to eligible families, but remember to book in advance.

NETWORK OF COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Network of Community Activities is an organisation that provides information on vacation care services and holiday programs for parents and carers of five to 12 year olds across NSW.

For more information check out their website at www.netoosh.org.au or call (02) 9212 3244.

DoCS thanks these organisations for their contribution to this fact sheet and invites you to visit their websites for more information.



www.dsr.nsw.gov.au



www.environment.nsw.gov.au



www.ymcasydney.org



www.cpla.asn.au



Tourism New South Wales

www.visitnsw.com



www.pcy NSW.org



www.mplansw.asn.au



www.netoosh.org.au