

Create Family Fun: Autumn

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Autumn Amusements

By consistently extending big and small acts of kindness, respect, and thoughtfulness to one another during both good days and challenging seasons, family members form relationship glue. These touchpoints hold family relationships together despite crises and through celebrations.

Connections, poignant moments, shared tears, and laughing-until-milk-comes-out-our-noses situations are the foundation for a shared history. These links provide confidence that we belong. Together.

- Rake the leaves and jump into them.
- Do an outdoor photo shoot.
- Enjoy local fall festivals.
- When available, attend games of local sports and school teams.
- Attend harvest parties hosted by churches that feature games and candy without the scarier elements.
- On All Saint's Day, highlight a Bible character or important person in church history.
- Thanksgiving morning, enjoy a Turkey Bowl football game. Invite friends and family to bring food to share, and watch the parade and game.
- Set out a basket with blank paper and pens. Throughout the Thanksgiving season, encourage family and guests to scribble thank-yous to the Lord, and watch the basket fill up.
- Tape a tree trunk made of brown construction paper to a wall. Family and guests write thank-yous on autumn-colored construction paper leaves and tape the leaves to the tree. By the end of the season, you'll have a fully leafed tree declaring the many things you are grateful for.

School Holiday Family Field Trips

- Plan ahead to use upcoming in-service half days and one-day holidays like Veteran's Day, President's Day, and Martin Luther King Jr. Day.
- Do some hands-on learning outdoors. Find and categorize leaves, do leaf tracings, tree bark rubbings, hunt for insects, collect seed pods.
- Go on a nature scavenger hunt: find an ant, feather, cloud, smooth stone, rough rock, twig, pointy leaf, round leaf.
- Learn the types of clouds, lay outside and watch the sky.
- Visit the nearby children's museum.
- Bike or hike to local parks.
- Use sidewalk chalk to make and play hopscotch or four square.
- Use sidewalk chalk to draw pictures.
- With sidewalk chalk, create a mini town for kids to play in.
- Make a miniature city from boxes.
- Practice jump rope, single and double-dutch.
- Rollerskate.
- Tie fishing line to a stick, use cheese for bait, and go fishing. Licenses are not required for kids.
- Take advantage of city-sponsored recreation options. Check for deals online.

How big is our solar system? Make an outdoor model.

Materials:

- 11 blank 5 x 7 cards
- felt marker or crayon
- tape measure
- 11 forks

On the first card, color a two-inch circle, and mark the card: “Sun.” This is actually one billionth of the sun’s actual size!

To shrink the rest of the planets to the same scale, place a small black dot on each of the remaining cards, labeling them: Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Asteroid Belt (the region of space filled with small chunks of rock between Mars and Jupiter), Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto.

Go to a large grassy area such as a baseball field or a city park. Thread the “sun” card through the tines of a fork. Plant the handle into the ground. Pace off six feet and plant the “Mercury” card into the ground.

11 feet - Venus

15 feet - Earth

24 feet - Mars

43 feet - Asteroids

80 feet - Jupiter

148 feet - Saturn (You have just traveled one billion miles in space!)

294 feet - Uranus (You have just traveled another billion miles!)

446 feet - Neptune

611 feet - Pluto (Can you still see the sun card? What do you think the Sun looks like from Pluto?)