



Restful Play: 4 Relaxing Ways to Have Fun With Your Kids

Active play is great for kids, especially in the summer when they can get outside ([/English/family-life/power-of-play/Pages/playing-outside-why-its-important-for-kids.aspx](#)) more. Running around at the local playground, playing catch, hopscotch or jumping rope are just a few examples of ways to have fun while getting the exercise kids need each day. But summer is also a great time to enjoy some rest and relaxation as a family, with a playful spin.

aRead on for a few ideas to mash up play and rest together this summer. Leave your phones and other devices pinging for your attention inside. Then sit back and focus on enjoying each other while and the world around us while revitalizing our minds and bodies.

Listening to your kids



Try to turn off the non-stop to-do list in every parent's brain, and just let go and follow the stream-of-consciousness, non-linear, and outside-the-box thinking that kids' minds do. Sometimes just asking "What if..." questions (the more outlandish, the better) can spark surprising and delightful conversations.

Some inspiration:

- What if a genie granted you three wishes? (Try adding this: And you had to use them to help someone else?)
- What if you could be an animal for a day? What would you be and do?
- What if your toys could talk? What would they say?

Getting on the ground

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Lying on the earth is, literally, "grounding"—a term used to describe organizing our minds and bodies. This could involve looking up close at grains of sand and blades of grass. Taking note of muffled sounds and different smells. Try to join in playful ways of thinking with your kids while you lay there: what does the world look like to a bug?

Reading outside



Reading outside can be relaxing ways to develop strong emotional bonds while enjoying the outdoors. Grab a blanket and a few books and find a shady spot for outdoor story time. Ideally, bring along books that are set outside so you can help your child make connections: "Oh, look, a picture of a cloud. Let's look up in the sky to find a cloud!"

Watching for feathered friends

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Put up a birdfeeder and enjoy watching the wildlife it attracts to your window or yard. Count how many different types of visitors you have. If you have binoculars, get a closer look at others on nearby perches. For birds you can hear but can't see, try to guess where they are. For extra fun, try to make the same sounds they do with their calls and songs.

More Information

- [Power of Play: An Alliance With Melissa & Doug \(/English/family-life/power-of-play/Pages/power-of-play-an-alliance-with-melissa-and-doug.aspx\)](#)
- [Monthly Play Printables \(https://www.melissaanddoug.com/blogcategory/?catId=13\)](https://www.melissaanddoug.com/blogcategory/?catId=13)—Free activity sheets you can print for your child

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