

A Time For Family Fun

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All Work And No Play Makes a Family Miserable!

Every one needs to have fun! And family's need to have fun together! But in the daily rounds of life, it is so easy to get so busy that we never take the time to build precious memories with our children.

This is one of two things for which I will always be grateful to Flylady. In Flylady's weekly schedule, she has Saturday down as "Family Fun Day" - a time to do something fun as a family. The thing that struck me most about this was that I saw that **you don't wait until you have your house under control and life running smoothly to do family fun; you make it a priority and do it anyway!** I had been using all the work I *had* to do as an excuse not to do fun things with my family. I truly believed I couldn't take time off until I was caught up.

Well guess what?? There will ALWAYS be things to do, urgent tasks to attend to, behind stuff to catch up on. But your children will not always be children; one day all too soon they will be grown and gone. And before that, they will be teenagers; more independent and self-reliant. If you want your teenagers to want to hang around with your family, then you had better have a family that is fun! No, you don't have to turn your home into a circus, but you do need to have regular, fun, relationship and memory building times together. A regular family time and the precious memories you build will do a lot to bind your hearts together and to draw your older children back towards home.

Children also need something fun to look forward to. They need to know that life is not all work; that they can look forward to something each week. I suggest that you set aside either one day or one afternoon or evening each week to do something together as a family. It does not have to be costly, but try to vary the activities a bit.

Here is a list of suggestions for family fun. Look through it, and add your own. Decide what day of the week is best to have your regular Family Fun Time, and plan what you will do this week. Don't allow anything to stand in the

way; make this a priority. It's one more way of showing your children that they are more important than all the things you have to do!

Fun Family Ideas

- Pop a big bowl of popcorn and watch a fun movie together.
- Get out all the board games and cards and have a night of games and fun and laughter.
- Go for a relaxed walk somewhere new. Have icecream when you get home, or stop by the store and buy one each on the way back.
- Gather up the kids, a blanket and some snacks and go visit a local park, beach or forest. Take along a ball or Frisbee and play with your children.
- Play a round or two of mini-golf. Keep the score cards and see if you can improve your own scores the next time you play.
- Have a beauty therapy session - get out the hand lotion and hair brushes etc and take turns rubbing each other's feet, hands, necks etc, and doing each other's hair.
- Look up a list of children's party games (three-legged races, egg and spoon race, musical chairs etc) and plan an afternoon of fun, silly games and special fun food "just because".
- Set up a "tent" in the living room with blankets and chairs, and all huddle inside. Read stories of pioneers and hunters and explorers.
- Have an alphabet night. Pick a letter, and plan a menu that has everything beginning with that letter. Wear clothing according to the theme, and read poetry or stories that use alliteration with the same letter. For example, if you had a "P" night, everyone would wear purple or pink or pastel shades, you would eat pizza, popcorn, peanuts, pumpkin and parsley, and learn the tongue-twister "Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers....."
- An alternative is a colour night. Wear a certain colour, eat food of that colour (or colour it with food colouring - have you ever eaten green potatoes or blue flapjacks??), and play games or do activities around the colour.
- If you have teens, have a games night with activities geared towards them. Most teens love to compete, and like to get very physical. Find out what is fun for them, and make it happen.
- Plan an outing to a museum, play, ice-skating rink or other special treat.

- Have a "Mad Hatter's Tea Party" - all dress in the silliest way you can think of, and sit down together to a tea party complete with teapot and treats.

What day (or part of a day) will you set aside for regular family fun? What ideas do you have for activities you can do together. Write your ideas and plans down, and mark them on the calendar. Don't forget, if you don't make specific plans, it just won't happen!

The above article is excerpted from Goodbye Chaos, Hello Peace! Unit 2