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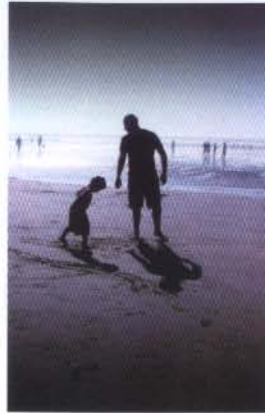
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FAMILY Smart Guide

A Family Smart Guide to fun, home, health and safety, professional services and education.



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Family Activities and Attractions

Play Time Games

Ready to turn off the video games but need a little creative direction for your energetic kids and their friends? Here's a few ideas perfect for play dates, snow days, and family picnics:



• **Costume CraziNESS:** Keep a big box of old clothes, Halloween costumes, linens and other costume props for dress-up fun. If you



don't have anything around the house, ask Grandma or check local thrift stores for dress-up-box treasures. Let your kids transform

themselves into princesses, fire fighters, or their favorite superhero and encourage some make-believe play.

• **Loony Balloons:** Blow up a balloon for each child plus an extra balloon. Before you tie the balloons, place a small marble in the neck of each balloon. This will make the balloon move in unexpected ways. Gather the children and challenge them to keep all the balloons in the air.

• **Down the Rabbit Hole:** Draw 26 circles on the sidewalk with chalk and put a letter of the alphabet in each – but not in order. Have your young “bunnies” hop from circle to circle to spell their name or easy words.



• **Hide the Thimble:** Pick any small object and show it to the children. Have all the children except one go out of the room. Have the remaining child hide the object, then call in the other children to find it. The kid who finds the object gets to be the next one to hide it. If the kids are having trouble finding the object, it's ok for the hider to say “hot” or “cold” as a hint.

• **American Bandstand:** Create a CD of kid-friendly dance music and give your



kids some make-believe instruments: oatmeal cans for drums, broom guitars, wooden spoon microphones, etc. Turn on the tunes and let the kids rock out. Keep the giggles going by having them freeze whenever you turn off the music – they won't be able to stay still for long – or offer little prizes for best dance move, best “air guitar,” or best lip sync performance.