

Keeping kids busy and out of trouble during the summer

As we're all aware, school is now out, or soon to be, and this raises the question of what the kids will do this summer while we're all at work. Every parent of a teenager knows that excess free time isn't a good thing – especially when it comes to keeping your child away from negative influences. Studies show petty crime increases during the summer. This type of crime often involves kids with too much time on their hands. They have also shown that the best way to keep this from happening and to keep kids out of trouble is to keep them busy.

Many people are ahead of the game and already have things lined up for their children and teens to do during the long summer days when school is out, but if you don't, here are some things you might think about. Summer jobs not only increase a young person's sense of responsibility, but that attitude lasts for several months following the summer.



The following tips can help ensure that your summer will be free of late-night phone calls or unexpected visits from local law enforcement.

Establish Rules & Consequences –Let your kids know what you expect of them and what consequences will result from their failure to comply.

Remain Open to Negotiation –When talking to your children about family rules, make sure that the communication is a discussion, not a lecture.

Keep Them Busy – When it comes to your kids and good behavior, boredom is *not* your friend. Whether you're enlisting their help in cleaning the house, sending them to the neighbor's to help with a few end-of-winter chores, or taking everyone to the mall for some spring shopping, the more activities you engage them in, the less opportunity they'll have to sneak away and engage in off-limits behaviors.

Develop a list of age-appropriate assignments and activities for your children, and balance "family time" with opportunities for your kids to enjoy moments of independence. Activities for youth and teens are too numerous to list, so here are some links to the available activities and classes, so you can see which ones might interest your family if you don't already have plans in place, or even if you do, you might find additional activities your kids would like.



Denton Public Library Activities

- https://issuu.com/dentonlibrary/docs/programs_spring_2016?e=5077637/33727582
- <http://www.cityofdenton.com/departments-services/departments-g-p/library/register-for-classes>

The City of Denton also has programs for people of all ages that will inform and entertain your kids.

- <http://www.cityofdenton.com/departments-services/departments-g-p/parks-recreation/activities-and-programs/youth>
- <http://www.cityofdenton.com/departments-services/departments-g-p/parks-recreation/activities-and-programs/teens>

Denton County fun

- <http://kidsactivitiesblog.com/45209/summer-activities-for-kids-in-denton-county>

Stay in Touch – Your child’s cell phone can be your best friend. One of the advantages of today’s media-saturated, hyper-connected world is that it’s much easier for you to get in touch with your teenager, and it’s much more difficult for them to claim that they couldn’t find a phone to check in with you.