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## Know! To BUST Summer Boredom

It's late June, which for many families means kids sitting around the house complaining of summer boredom. Annoying? Yes. Potentially dangerous? You bet.

While there is absolutely nothing wrong with teens experiencing a little boredom, too much time on their hands with "nothing to do" can lead to trouble, like experimenting with alcohol and drugs or engaging in other risky behaviors. On the other hand, there are the teens whose summers are completely scheduled out with non-stop activity and not a chance of stepping out of line; but that can be physically and mentally exhausting.

Teens need a healthy mix of both leisure and recreational activities to create balance and well-being for their body and mind. Exercise along with relaxation can improve their emotion and mood, self-esteem, social connections, sleep, cognitive functioning and overall quality of life. It is also important to note that when parents and children get active or relax together, the family bond is likely to improve and strengthen.

Here are some safe, fun ideas to help teens avoid the pitfalls of summer boredom while maintaining a balance of physical activity and relaxation:

- Invite a few friends over for grilled hot dogs and s'mores
- Bake some cupcakes and deliver them to homebound seniors or residents at a nursing home
- Volunteer at a local animal or homeless shelter
- Reach out to an old friend
- Gather some friends to play cards or board games
- Have a pamper your pet day – maybe a bath, a walk and a special treat for your pet
- Host a movie night at your house – rent an outdoor projector, pop some popcorn and invite some friends over
- On a rainy day, head to the movies with your siblings or have a movie marathon at home
- Make dinner for your family
- Volunteer to babysit for a neighbor or someone else you know who could use your help

- Buy a few inexpensive plastic kiddie pools for you and your friends to goof around in
- Go out for lunch with one or both of your parents
- Set up a tent or self-made “fort” and have a campout in your backyard
- Create a neighborhood scavenger hunt for you and your friends
- Make homemade ice cream or have an ultimate banana split-making contest
- Use a tarp to create a giant slip and slide and invite friends to join in
- Invite a friend for a run or to workout with you
- Get outdoors – take a hike, go fishing or plan a canoe trip with a group of friends
- Host a gathering around a TV sporting event
- Check out a list of carnivals or fairs coming to town, or head to an amusement park

After reading through the ideas above, encourage your teen to make note of things that caught their interest, and to then add to the list as they think of more. They should also keep it in a handy spot so that when boredom strikes or they can't think of anything to do, they can simply pull out their list of summer boredom busters and they'll have a variety of ideas at their fingertips.

Source: [Families Online Magazine: 50 Fun Things To Do This Summer!](#) [TheSimpleMom.com: 200+ Summertime Ideas for Bored Kids.](#) [2010 The Social Report: Leisure and Recreation.](#) [Minding Our Bodies: Physical Activity and Mental Health Literature Review, March 2009.](#)

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