

Fun in the Park



Kids love a fun trip to the park on a warm day. They hurry from the swings to the slide to the merry-go-round. They play tag and run in the wide, open spaces.

With a little help from mom and dad, however, parks can also be places of learning and adventure. Help boost your child's brain power. Be creative when you and your child visit the park.

Design your own park. Bring a sketch book and colored pencils. Help your child design his own playground. Draw pictures of fun playground equipment. Give them names like *Super Silly Slide* or *Fly-to-the-Sky Swings*.

- Learn about measurements. Take a ruler or measuring tape. Measure a leaf, twig or picnic table. Write the measurements down in a book.
- Take “wacky measurements.” For example, use a bat or a juice box as a measuring stick. See how many times your child's stuffed animal would fit around a tree trunk.
- Run an obstacle course. Let your child design a course up and down slides, under swings and around trees. Mom

and dad can keep track of everyone's time with a stop watch. Let each child design a course. Run several races.

- Play the imagination game. The slide could be an elephant or a giant “friendly snake.” The swings could be an airplane or a space ship getting ready to go into outer space.
- Bring a book, and let your child act out the story. Or, tell a story, and use the playground equipment for “props.” For example, the top of the slide could be a princess' tower. The see-saw could be a boat in stormy waters. Be creative. Let your imagination run wild.
- Bring treats for the birds. They can have a picnic while you have a picnic. Coat a pinecone with peanut butter and bird seed. Hang the pinecone in a tree near your picnic table. Watch to see if the birds eat the seeds. Count how many birds come to eat.

Learning can take place outside of the classroom. Parents make good teachers. Make the outdoors your classroom. Have fun and learn while you play in the park.

Call the Parent Help Line. We listen. We can find you help.
544-5808 or 1-888-727-5889 from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., 7 days a week.