

Free summer fun

Teach kids to save with these fun (*and free*) projects

From water parks to vacations to buying new toys, fun summer activities can cost a lot of money. However, many family activities do not cost any money at all. You can do them in your own home, without any special supplies. You can have fun while saving money at the same time! To help you think of fun activities for your family, creditunion.coop has created a step-by-step design to make a Fun-for-Free Box.

FUN-FOR-FREE BOX

Materials needed:

Plain paper or construction paper

Pencils, pens, crayons or markers

A small empty box, such as a shoebox

Step 1: Explain what you will be doing together.

The two of you will make a list of fun activities. This list will have all the things that you and your child enjoy that do not cost any money.

Step 2: Make a list of fun activities.

Ask what type of activities your child likes to do for fun. List those that do not cost money. You might have to suggest examples of free activities to get your child thinking.

Examples: Playing on a swing, coloring, painting, dressing up, singing, reading a book, walking the dog, picking flowers, playing a board game or card game, drawing with chalk on the sidewalk or making an obstacle course with pillows and soft furniture.

Step 3: Make activity notes.

Cut a large piece of paper into squares.

STORY BY MEGAN WHITWORTH



At Southland Federal Credit Union we believe it is important to teach our children early about the importance of saving and spending money. If your children do not already have an account at our credit union, why not open one up today!

Thinkstock photos

On one side of one square, write the name of an activity from the list. On the other side of the square, help your child draw the activity. The drawing and the word will remind your child of each activity. Put each finished note on the box.

Step 4: Use the notes as reminders.

Keep the activity notes in the box. Add a note with a picture each time your child learns a new way to have free fun. When

your child is bored, suggest looking at all the notes. They will give your child many choices for fun activities that save you money.

As your child learns about fun activities that don't cost money, you can also discuss with your family different ways to save money. Here are a few tips provided by Moneycrashers.com that can help you teach your children to save money.

USE DIFFERENT ENVELOPES OR JARS

On either envelopes or jars, have your child draw pictures of what he or she wants. You may also want to help your child understand that some items will take longer than others to save for.

For example, the short-term savings container might have a picture of a specific toy, while the long-term container might have a picture of a trip to Disneyland. Teach your child to set aside money for short-term and long-term goals, and have another container or envelope for spending on everyday items.

MAKE A SAVINGS GOAL CHART

Once you know what your child wants to save for, figure out how many weeks it will take and make a chart. You can represent each week with a box and your child can put a sticker in that box once the money from that week's allowance is set aside.

MONEY MATTERS



One of the best things you can do is let your child see that you save money too.

OFFER REWARDS FOR SAVING MONEY

Consider rewarding your child for saving his or her money. Much like my credit union, which offers t-shirts and other prizes, you can offer prizes to your children.

For example, if your child doesn't spend any money for a certain amount of time, provide a small reward or treat. You can also make the prizes better the longer your child saves. Try stickers, an extra 1/2 hour of video games, toys or whatever motivates your child.

SET A GOOD EXAMPLE

One of the best things you can do is let your child see that you save money too. Put money in a jar while your child is watching and tell him or her it's your savings jar. This will show your child that saving is normal. Plus, since most young children want to be like their parents, seeing you do it will provide them with money lessons that further inspire them to save.

To learn about money basics stop by Southland Federal Credit Union to pick up a copy of "Building Wealth" for more great ideas on how to sharpen your savings and money skills. Come see us at 2601 S. John Redditt Dr., Lufkin, TX 75904 or give us a call at (936) 639-2311 today!

Sources: Credit Union National Association, Inc., Moneycrashers.com

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**Bring them in today to
get Wild About Saving**