

Librarian's Shelf by Karen Connell

Simple Summer Fun

Summer is well underway and we are having a blast at Columbus Public Library with our summer reading programs for all ages! With activities happening at the library every day for various ages, there are many opportunities to have fun this summer. But what is there to do to fill the rest of the hours and weeks?

You could send your children to day camps in Columbus or even week-long camps at campgrounds nearby. I just returned from a week of volunteering at the Columbus Royal Family KIDS Camp, a camp specifically designed for children who have been abused, abandoned, or neglected. And while it's a special camp, we do all the same fun activities as any other summer camp such as the Y Summer Camp or Camp Luther.

You can create a camp experience at home for your children and their friends by checking out books available at the library filled with ideas for craft projects, group games, and of course the traditional campfire!

"The Book of Doing" by Allison Arden is full of "everyday activities to unlock your creativity and joy." The author suggests activities such as transcribing the words to a favorite song, eating oatmeal for breakfast every day for three weeks, designing your own insignia, and smiling at a stranger every day. The book is filled with silly and interesting ideas to beat boredom.

Another way to beat boredom is by getting outside and gardening. Whitney Cohen and John Fisher of Life Lab have written "The book of Gardening Projects for Kids," which gives step by step instructions for projects of varying difficulty. You can start small by making mud pies or decorative ice cubes, or go big by actually creating gardens for projects like planting a prehistoric jungle and the living canvas.

"Great Group Games for Kids" by Susan Ragsdale and Ann Saylor has 150 activities that are divided into categories such as name games, conversation games, relationship builders, team play, games for exploring values, challenges, and celebrations. From relay races to the Marshmallow Olympics, this book is packed with great activities for groups of children. Some activities require props, such as a metal pan and spoon when playing Cymbal Crashers, and others require none, like the game Gossip on the Run.

"Easy Campfire Cooking" by Fox Chapel Publishing, "Campground Cookery" by Brenda K. Kulibert, and "Camp Cooking in the Wild" by Mark Scriver, Wendy Grater, and Joanna Baker all contain recipes for summer dishes that range from simple to more involved. You might not want to undertake the project of making sushi in your backyard but perhaps grilled egg burritos would be more your style. The books also include information on setting up a campfire and various types of grills, and even how to foil wrap your snack or dinner so you can enjoy treats like campfire popcorn.

The library also has quite a few books with ideas for indoor craft projects so you can take a break from the midday sun and head inside for more fun activities. Browse "Eco Friendly

Crafting with Kids” by Kate Lilley, “The Busy Mom’s Book of Quick Crafts for Kids” by Judith Logan Lehne, Jessica Vitkus’ “AlternaCrafts,” and Barron’s “Craft Kids” by Rosie Hankin for lots of fun and simple ideas for craft projects for kids of all ages.

These books should help you get creative this summer when you aren’t attending library events or reading for prizes! Stop by the library to check out these books and more today and call us at 402-564-7116 if you have any questions.