



Save Money On Kids' Activities

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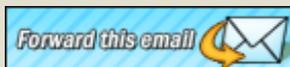
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If you're a parent, you know just how expensive it can be to raise kids, especially once they reach the age of activities - sports, dance, cheer, karate, band. You name the activity, and there's nothing cheap about it. The key is to pick and choose the ones that offer the right mix of enjoyment and enrichment for your child, and affordability for you.



Here are 4 ways to cut the cost of kids' activities:

1) Take advantage of free or cheap activities

If you're simply looking for ways to help your child socialize and develop a new skill, you may be able to fill his or her afternoons with low-cost activities like the school chess club or art classes at the local library. See if there's an intramural club through your church or talk to fellow parents about organizing a weekly trip to the park for some basketball or soccer.

2) Understand total cost up front

Be sure you know what you're getting into by asking about extra costs before you sign up. Does the cost include uniforms or entries into tournaments? Are there any fundraising activities that can help offset the cost? What happens to those fees if your child gets hurt, or ends up not liking the activity after a few weeks? You won't know unless you ask.

3) Appeal to team spirit

When beginning a new activity, ask other parents and coaches if anyone is willing to donate hand-me-down gear, uniforms, dancing shoes, etc., or if there is an option to rent equipment or instruments.

If you do have to buy new gear, don't splurge on top-of-the-line name brands, and always look for discounts and coupons.

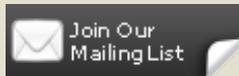
4) Have a heart-to-heart

Have an honest conversation with your son or daughter about choosing just one or two areas of interest, and what your limits are in terms of how much you can afford.

Source: www.livingonthecheap.com

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