

Cabin Fever

Does the cold weather have your family stuck indoors?



During cold or snowy weather, spending time snuggled together indoors is a wonderful idea, but cabin fever can take hold after just a few days.

Parents often need fresh ideas to keep cooped-up children from feeling stuck indoors otherwise boredom and pent-up energy can quickly turn into mischief.

To prevent or cure cabin fever indoors, have your kids shake things up. Don't forget that the outdoors still can be fun if you're bundled up warm. Best of all, most of these activities don't have to cost anything.

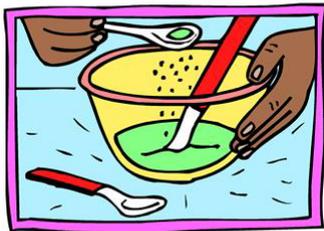
What parents can do

Shake things up: get active indoors

- ♥ Turn on the music or exercise video and dance! Lead younger children through simple marching or skipping around the living room.
- ♥ Make an indoor obstacle course. Rearrange the furniture to make obstacles for kids to climb over, under, around and through.
- ♥ Jump rope. Push the furniture out of the way and jump rope; be sure you have enough clear space.
- ♥ Balloon Olympics. For kids over 3, balloons offer lots of play possibilities. Beware of balloons for babies and toddlers; latex balloons, when popped or deflated, are a serious choking hazard.
- ♥ Finger painting. Kids love the squishy feel of finger paint. No paint in the house? Try painting with chocolate pudding on freezer or waxed paper.



Think things out: be creative or learn something new



- ♥ Put some fun into lunch. If your children are Dr. Seuss fans, have them help make green eggs and ham (add a drop of green food coloring before cooking scrambled eggs). Involve kids in measuring, mixing and setting the table.
- ♥ Learn a new skill! If your elementary school-age child is involved a youth group, look at the organizations materials for activities to try.
- ♥ Visit the library. Even beginning readers can get a free library card.
- ♥ Invent silly stories. Have one person start telling an original story. Just when it gets exciting, the first person stops and another must make up the next part.
- ♥ Do an art project. Grab any art supplies you have around the house such as: old magazines and cereal boxes.

Bundle up and get out

- ♥ Go to the zoo. See which animals like the snow.
- ♥ Go ice-skating. Check out indoor and outdoor skating rinks in your area.
- ♥ Go sledding. Many parks offer free sledding, just bring your sleds.
- ♥ Build a whole snow family, including a cat or a dog.

