

## The great outdoors, holidays, getting active and keeping healthy

As the days are longer and the nights remain light; it's just the perfect time to get outdoors. And getting fresh air, even if just once a day, is essential to our wellbeing and mental outlook.

In fact, spending time outdoors in nature has been found to help with multiple mental health problems, including anxiety and depression. You might wish to try gardening or doing some DIY, or even going for a nature walk. You may even be tempted to try on those trainers and head out for a run or a hike.

### Here's how getting active can help you and your family today

**Make a fairy garden:** Create a little safe haven for the fairies to visit your garden. Put out some fairy glitter and some water for them to drink and perhaps even create a little fairy bed. The children will be in their own little make believe world.

**Plant some sunflower seeds:** Sunflower seeds are relatively inexpensive so grab your trowel and get planting. The kids will love to see their hard work come to fruition as those flowers grow.

**Make a den:** Use the washing line and some sheets or an old cardboard box to create a fun den for the children to play in. Not only is this a fun outdoor activity, but it keeps them in the shade too, perfect for those hot days.

**Create a mud kitchen:** You don't need much to create a fun little mud kitchen, grab some old pans and spoons from the kitchen and get creative. The kids will love the mess and you will love the peace.

Whatever it is you decide to do, spending time in green spaces or bringing nature into your everyday life can benefit both your mental and physical wellbeing no end.

Not only this, but outdoor activities can also help to improve your mood, reduce feelings of stress or anger, and can help you to feel more relaxed. Are you starting to feel that the long summer holidays are becoming a bit of drain? Have you run out of ideas on what to do with the kids? If so don't fear – we have some tips just for you.



**Sleep outside:** Put up that tent and have a garden sleepover. You could even make a campfire and cook some marshmallows too.

**Freeze toys in ice:** Freeze some small plastic toys in ice and then encourage your children to chip away at the ice with some child friendly tools. This is lots of fun for all ages.

**Paint with water:** Fill a pot with some water and collect some old paint brushes. Then let the kids paint on your patio or fences with water. It's mess free and lots of fun.

**Go for a nature scavenger hunt:** Draw up a list of items your children might find on a walk and put a little tick box next to each item. Then head out together on a nature walk and see what you can find.

**Create an obstacle course:** Put out some cones or anything else you have, grab some footballs or other toys and build your own obstacle course. Fitness can be fun too. Water play: Fill up the paddling pool or some buckets and enjoy watching the children have hours of fun.