



*The invention of sand surfing back in 2009 – a little imagination and a lot of fun*

# FUN ACTIVITIES for Do Nothing Days in the Summer

By Lorraine Payette

Just another whiny Monday on a beautiful summer day? Turn it into a fun day with the kids! Every parent dreads having to keep their children amused when boredom strikes in the summertime. Instead of plunking them down with electronic devices, do something together that will let everyone have a good time. You can create great memories that will last forever.

There are all kinds of activities that can be shared whether indoors or out.

Try setting up a snack and beverage stand. A simple table with a pitcher of lemonade and a few paper cups, a few packages of homemade cookies or other treats and a young person is off and running a business. Maybe ask 25 cents a cup for beverages, 50 cents for a bag of two cookies or a brownie, and see how many people stop to buy. Show the kids how to keep track of their money – write down how much they sold and how much it cost, and make sure they set some aside for the future as well as getting to enjoy their earnings.

Old fashioned games are also fun. Get out the bright colours and let them use chalk to decorate your sidewalk and garage door. The rain will wash it away, giving them a clean slate to work on every few days.

Jump ropes are easily made or purchased. Single child skipping or long-rope jumping with others can be a lot of fun. Try all the “skipping” games from your childhood and share them or go on-line to [http://www.gameskidsplay.net/jump\\_rope\\_rhymes/](http://www.gameskidsplay.net/jump_rope_rhymes/) and see some of the great games they have to offer. They also have a link for clapping games which can keep two kids happy for hours while increasing their manual dexterity. For the truly brave, try double-Dutch and see just how good you can get over the course of a summer.

Jacks and hoop rolling are other fun games from the past. While barrel hoops are no longer available, hula hoops can be had in quantity. They can be played with in the traditional way, or rolled along the ground with a stick, trying to keep them balanced.

There are even hoop tossing games which bring out the giggles as you try to toss a hoop back and forth in a game of catch, using two sticks instead of your hands to catch and throw.

Jacks can still be purchased in toy stores (try on-line if you can't get them nearby). The object is to toss a small rubber ball into the air with one hand and let it bounce once while picking up a jack with the same hand before catching the ball again. Start with one at a time and work your way up to see if you can get them all. Full playing rules can be found at <http://www.wikihow.com/Play-Jacks>.

Get out some basic ingredients and make brownies, cake or cookies. When they cool, decorate them with different coloured icing or sprinkles and dig in.

Build forts – inside or out. Sofa cushions, sheets and blankets can transform a living room into a great fort or indoor camping spot. Outside, try finding different things in the garage or around the yard that can be built into a great fort. Try building something you can sleep out in, then (under adult supervision) set up a small charcoal barbecue and have a campfire in it with marshmallows.

Once you get started, the choices are endless – from blowing bubbles to costume parades to making your own instruments and starting a band. Let your imaginations fly, and there will be no more whiny Mondays, only fun days summer. **LH**



*What do you do when there's nothing to do?*