

TOP PARENTING TIPS

Central
Bedfordshire

Having Fun: Fun can sometimes be the last thing that we think about, especially when there are so many other daily jobs we need to do as parents but it's a really important part of family life and can help your children's development.

- **Games!** Board games, card games, team games, hide and seek, eye spy...any type of game can be a cheap, hassle free way to inject a burst of fun into the family and can be used with any age child.
- **Cooking!** This can be a quick and easy way to have fun together and children love to eat food they have made themselves. Try making pizzas - you can buy the base and then use pots with different toppings to all create your own pizza.
- **Go outdoors!** Take a look at The National Trust website for lots of local parks, walking areas and ideas for family fun. Pop along to your local Children's Centre who can also offer some great fun activities and advice on things to do.
- **10 minutes!** Having fun together doesn't need to require hours of your time as a parent, just 10 minutes on a daily basis can be more than enough to share some wonderful moments and have lots of fun!
- **Water play!** Getting some paintbrushes and water and 'painting' the floor, fence or wall can be great fun for children and requires very little clean up as it's only water!
- **Be prepared!** This really can be the motto that ensures your plans go as smoothly as they can! If you have any long car journeys or trips that you foresee your children don't enjoy or cope with then spend some time beforehand planning things that might help e.g. games for a car journey, regular breaks, distractions such as comics, colouring pads or handheld game devices. Being prepared will help you to cover many possible situations and therefore help you to feel confident and calm about the upcoming situation.
- **Research!** Use the internet to search for money saving vouchers and great deals on days out. Trips such as the zoo or theme parks can be very costly and so look for vouchers, including 2-for-1, kids go free etc. online or in newspapers, magazines.

These tips are some ideas to support parents, to find out more about the work the council does to support local families, or for more information please go to www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/families

