

Cent\$ible Nutrition News

Helping Families Eat Better for Less

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Let it Snow



Oh, the weather outside is frightful, and kids climbing the walls is not delightful. It's winter break and you're wondering how to burn off some of that stored up energy and excitement. This month, CNP educators and staff offer their favorite ways to keep kids and the whole family active in the winter.

Outside Activities

Winter offers fun opportunities for being active, especially for kids. Playing in newly fallen snow, making snow angels, and building snowmen are delights that are only possible this season. Snow or no snow, these are some of our favorite winter outdoor activities:

- **Winter Wonderland Walks-** "My son loves Christmas as much as any kid but one thing he really loves are the lights," says Abby, CNP Program Manager. "We bundle up and take 'light walks' through the neighborhood. He gets so excited! This is something we have done since he was an infant and it is one of our favorite holiday traditions."
- **Snow Time-** "If there is snow, my kids love to bundle up and build snowmen in the yard, or go sledding," says Cheryl, Natrona County CNP Educator. "There is a sledding hill nearby, but they can also shovel snow and make a hill in our yard. Climbing up

and down hills--usually in a hurry--is great exercise! Gathering and packing snow for a snowman also provides exercise and fresh air. On milder days, we can walk to our neighborhood park and play. We also have two dogs who need daily walks, no matter the weather."

- **Frigid Frolic-** "My grand kids love to be outside no matter the temperature," says Debbie, Park County CNP Educator. "They will bundle up and go out and make their own fun, snow or no snow. We also get out and go sledding."
- **Build a snow fort-** Like building a snowman, building a snow fort takes a lot of energy and strength.
- **Shovel the sidewalk-** Older kids may be willing to shovel the sidewalk and depending on the amount of snow, this can be quite a work out. Shoveling snow can also be a good way to start a snow fort.
- **Walking scavenger hunt-** "My daughter loves school buses, so on our afternoon walk, we always look for school buses, different colors of cars, and rabbits," says Kali, CNP Marketing Coordinator "It keeps her engaged and excited to be outside."
- **Play at the school playground-** school playgrounds will likely be open during the winter break and offer a safe space to play.

Inside Activities

Let's face it, there are just some days where it is too cold to play outside. Playing inside can be just as fun with our tried and true ideas.

- **Paper Snowballs-** "Something we like to do is have a paper snowball fight," says Beth, CNP Educator in Goshen and Niobrara Counties. "You can throw the snowballs at each other, try tossing them into a laundry basket, or see who can throw them the farthest."

Continued on the back

Let it Snow, Continued

“Another way you can use the paper snowballs is to have the kids do something, like five push-ups or walk like a bear around the room, before they throw a snowball. Join in the fun with the kids! Kids enjoy being active with someone who wants to be active with them.”

- **Dance Party**- “My daughter has a favorite dance song and loves getting into a costume to get her dance moves on,” says Kali. “We get dressed up, turn up the music, then hop, skip, jump, and wiggle all over the kitchen. It gets us both breathing hard and laughing!”
- **Hide and seek**- racing around the house to hid and seek can be fun for the whole family and kids of all ages.
- **YouTube activity videos**- From yoga to aerobics to strength building exercises to dancing and beyond, there are so many activity videos to pick from on YouTube.
- **Sock toss**- Grab all those mismatched socks and fold them together (or any socks) and a laundry basket. Play any of the ways Beth talked about for paper snowballs.
- **Active TV games**- “We are getting a hand-me-down Wii for Christmas for super cold days,” says Abby. “I’m excited for it and games like Just Dance and Golf.”

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Vegetable Beef Soup

Ingredients

- 4½ cups low-sodium broth
- ½ cup onion
- 2 teaspoons Italian Seasoning
- 1 bay leaf
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- 10-ounce package frozen mixed vegetables (2 cups)
- 15-ounce can diced tomatoes
- 14.5-ounce canned beef or 2 cups cooked, ground meat

Directions

1. Wash hands with warm soapy water for 20 seconds.
2. Chop the onion.
3. In a large saucepan, mix broth, onion, Italian Seasoning, bay leaf, and black pepper. Heat.
4. Stir in mixed vegetables and beef, but not tomatoes.
5. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover, and simmer for 6-8 minutes or until vegetables are tender crisp. Remove bay leaf and throw away.
6. Stir in tomatoes. Heat through.

Makes 8 servings



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