



Unplug

AND CONNECT

Tip #1: Explore the outdoors

After a recent survey revealed to us that children today are spending half the amount of time outside as their parents did when they were little, we wanted to help parents get their children outside and disconnect from technology. That's why we've created our **Unplug and Connect** campaign so families can have fun with loved ones all summer long... whilst enjoying Mother Nature!

Spending time in nature is important for healthy child development. Research even finds that green outdoor settings seem to reduce ADHD symptoms in children, so we've designed some engaging activities to do at outside with little expense:

Hopscotch

Get out the coloured chalk and help your children draw a huge hopscotch path. Add extra fun by trading traditional hopscotch square shapes for cars, butterflies, fish, and other fun designs.

Old-Fashioned Races

Why not collect some hessian sacks (or pillowcases), create a start and finish line and have an old-fashioned sack race! Failing that, try dividing then children into pairs and use a scarf to bind their inside legs together for a fun three-legged race.

Have a Four-Square Tournament

You'll need four players and a large rubber ball. Mark out a 12" x 12" square in your garden or on a patio, then divide into four squares and label them A, B, C, and D. One player stands in each square. The player in A starts by bouncing the ball in their square, then batting it with open hands into another square. The player that receives the ball in their square must then hit the ball into a different square. When one player misses or hits the ball out of bounds, the players advance in a clockwise motion and you can begin again.

Check out the Stars

To get started, buy or **download** a star chart. Then, choose one spot in your garden that will give you a clear view of the night sky and venture out after dinner to watch how the sky changes from hour to hour. A little fresh air before bedtime can really help your children sleep in later too.

Plan a Treasure Hunt

On your own, plant little jewels and treasures in the garden. Next, draw up a map with directions then roll up into a scroll and tie with ribbon for effect. For an ancient look, let some coffee soak into the map to brown it with age; while the paper is still damp, rip it around the edges.

You can even hide the map somewhere in the house and let the kids find it while making the bed or putting away toys.

Make a Den

Find the perfect spot in the garden or woodland, it should be quiet and secluded and contain natural structures that will help you build the den. Then, gather materials – look for fallen, unbroken branches these can be tied into small bunches to form more strength when building. Finish off the den with some creativity, children could create a sign for their den such as 'Alfie's Den' or gather other materials to help camouflage the den.

