

TODAY'S FUTURE

School Lunch Ideas

School lunches don't have to be boring and unhealthy!

These school lunch and snack ideas are easy to pack, great for eating on-the-go and enjoyable for children to eat at school.

Check them out on the following Pinterest Board!

<https://www.pinterest.com/thehealthyfam/school-lunch-ideas/>

Let's Talk...Safe Sleep

Let's face it... talking about infant safe sleep best practices in a marketing world full of soft plush blankets and generations of parenting practices can be a challenge. Some of my most difficult conversations with child care professionals have been around safe sleep recommendations and why infant care practices of the past are no longer appropriate. New and ongoing research is clear and consistent – there are infant sleep practices that significantly reduce the risk that a child will die from a sudden and unexplained cause.

To make the conversation easier and simpler, our partners at Iowa Child Care Resource and Referral have recently released an approach that makes safe sleep best practices as simple as **A, B, C**.

- **A... Alone** – *the infant should be alone in the crib with no blankets, pillows, animals or loose bedding*
- **B... Back** – *the infant should be placed on his or her back*
- **C... Crib** – *a crib is best for a sleeping infant*

Steps you can take:

- **Hang** the [ABC's of Sleep for Child Care Providers](https://iastate.app.box.com/s/ghrfiu62pljidsklhesfsqcc0070hnh1j) (<https://iastate.app.box.com/s/ghrfiu62pljidsklhesfsqcc0070hnh1j>) flier wherever care of infants takes place
- **Share** the [ABC's of Sleep for Families](https://iastate.app.box.com/s/qnnc7i8w6sa5dcdacmm3t9tvccejk43i) (<https://iastate.app.box.com/s/qnnc7i8w6sa5dcdacmm3t9tvccejk43i>) flier with families in your program
- **Discuss** safe sleep best practice as part of your regular conversations with staff and families
- **Follow** safe sleep best practices, always!



P.S. I would like to personally acknowledge the efforts of Mary Janssen for her hard work and efforts towards the creation of these documents.

Cindy Thompson is a family life specialist with fond memories of her years caring for children in her home.

Source: <http://blogs.extension.iastate.edu/childcare/safe-sleep/>

Playful Ways for Cooler Days

Relief from the heat is often welcome with the falling leaves and changing colors of fall. With the change of seasons comes change in our active lives. Kids were once playing in the outdoor pool, participating in organized sports like baseball, softball, and soccer, and going for bike rides down to the park during the warmer months.

What to do when it starts to get cold outside to keep young hearts healthy, young bones and muscles strong, and young bodies energized? NO couch potatoes allowed!

There are many activities that kids can do to help keep them fit while having fun during the fall and winter months. First of all, just because the temperature drops does not mean that outside activities have to cease. Just remember to wear warm layers of clothing, drink water with increasing activity and wear sunscreen. Here are some outdoor activities to enjoy in the fall and winter that is fun for all ages:

- ✓ Enjoy the beautiful foliage on a walk or hike
- ✓ Rake leaves and play in the piles
- ✓ Visit a pumpkin patch to select the perfect pumpkins
- ✓ Visit a corn maze
- ✓ Try a holiday race like a “Turkey Trot” 5k walk or run
- ✓ Snowshoeing around your yard or out on a golf course
- ✓ Ice skating at an indoor or outdoor rink
- ✓ Sledding on your favorite hill
- ✓ Build a snowman or snow fort
- ✓ Go cross country skiing
- ✓ Have a snowball fight and make snow angels
- ✓ Help your neighbors by shoveling their snow



There are always cold, wet, snowy days that require everyone to be inside for the day. Again, parents can encourage kids to be active while inside the home. The following are a few ideas to help keep kids moving while using their imaginations and their brains.

- Turn up the music and dance
- Play board games or card games for a while and then switch to a more active game
- Let friends come over to build forts with blankets and the furniture
- Jump rope
- See who can balance on one foot the longest
- Hula hoop



Source: Tracy Trumper, Family and Consumer Extension Agent, Phillips County