



KidPower! News

From the NH Department of Health and Human Services

Spring 2009

Discover Wild NH Day



April 18, 2009, 10 am – 3 pm
on the grounds of the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department, Hazen Drive in Concord. **Admission is free.**

This festival is fun for all ages. Kids can try:

- Archery
- Fishing
- Wildlife craft projects
- See retriever dogs in action
- Big trout and salmon
- Trained falcons
- Battling bull moose



Learn about gas-saving hybrid vehicles and ideas for conserving energy and protecting our environment.

Throughout the day, enjoy ongoing exhibits, presentations, walks and demonstrations.

Visit www.WildNH.com for more details.

Turn Off TV Turn On a Healthier Life!

TV Turn Off Week is held in April each year to encourage families to watch less TV during school vacation and to remind parents that most families watch too much TV. Studies have found that children often watch more than the recommended 2 hours or less of TV per day. If you add computer and video games use, most school-age children are in front of a TV or computer for 5 hours per day!

On average, adults watch about 4 hours of TV per day. Depending on their job, adults may sit all day at a computer. This is a lot of time sitting and not moving!



Parents that reduce TV watching in their homes report:



- More meaningful conversations with their children
- Children ask less for brand name or popular toys
- Children learn to entertain themselves
- Children play for longer amounts of time
- Less fighting between brothers and sisters

Other studies found that the more TV a child watches the more likely the child is to be overweight. It is believed that TV watching increases the risk of overweight because while watching TV:

- Children may burn less calories
- Children may be less active because they are taking time away from play and activity
- Children are exposed to a lot of food ads and may be eating higher calorie foods in response to the advertising
- Children often snack on unhealthy foods

Many parents don't want to limit their children's TV time because they would have to set a good example and limit their own TV time. Since adults watch more TV than children it can be challenging for parents to make a change that works for the whole family. Children will be more likely to reduce TV time if they see their parents cutting back on TV too.

One way to help manage how much TV children watch is to use parental controls through the TV, cable, or satellite TV provider. For more information go to: <http://www.thetvboss.org/>.

Gardening for Activity, Fun, and to Save Money

Many families are trying to spend less and save money. One way to lower food costs is to start a small garden and do more home cooking instead of eating out a lot.



- Start with easy to grow vegetables like bush beans, zucchini, summer squash, cucumbers, and cherry tomatoes. Buy small plants at a greenhouse instead of planting them from seed. Ask the greenhouse staff when you can plant them outdoors without worrying about frost.
- Sunflowers are easy to start from seed. They can be started in egg cartons with potting soil, kept in a sunny window, kept moist, and then transplanted in the garden when you starting planting vegetables.
- Traditional gardens need to have well drained soil, plenty of sunlight, and be near a water source so you can easily water the garden.
- Make sure gardens are away from manure piles, well caps, septic systems, and where wildlife or family pets can roam.
- Making raised garden beds with added compost and topsoil is an option if your do not have good soil.
- If you don't have room for a garden you can grow vegetables in large pots on a porch, deck, or stoop, as long as the plants get at least 8 hours of sunlight per day. Lettuce and herbs can be grown in window boxes too. Check plants each day to make sure they don't dry out.
- For more gardening information call the UNH Cooperative Extension Family Home and Garden Education Center at 1-877-EXT-GROW or 1-877-398-4769 Monday – Friday 9 am – 2 pm and Wednesday nights 5 pm – 7:30 pm.



Ways to Get Outside and Enjoy Spring While Staying Within Your Budget

NH has a lot of free activities for families to enjoy. Going to a local farmers' market, festivals, or enjoying a hiking trail, are all fun things to do as a family. The Visit NH events calendar is a good place to find things to do as a family (not all of these events are free). Check out the calendar at: www.visitnh.gov/best-time-to-visit/event-calendar.aspx .

Other free things to do as a family:



- Visit your local library and check out books about gardening and cooking.
- Ask your library if they have museum passes that you can use.
- Visit your local historical society and learn about your community.
- Do yard work as a family:
 - Give small children easy jobs that take 15 minutes or less
 - Bigger kids can help with shoveling soil, sweeping up sand, and planting
 - Help to clean up your neighborhood. Use gloves when picking up garbage, food waste and wrappers
- Get outside and play!
- Find out what your local recreation department has for activities.

