



Great activities to do with kids of all ages... rain or shine

Do you ever suddenly just want the computer games and TV to stop, and do something to get everyone moving again? Here's refreshing inspiration for when those moments strike...

- Coax kids on a walk by getting together with another family or packing a picnic and a kite. Winter is the perfect time to go to the Bedgebury National Pinetum in Kent (www.bedgebudypinetum.org.uk; tel: 01580 211781), for instance, for beautiful conifers and fantastic play equipment amongst the trees. For more ideas on family-friendly winter walks contact the Ramblers' Association (0207 339 8500).
- Not cold enough for you? Wrap up warm and go tobogganing at Xscape snow slopes in Milton Keynes, Glasgow or Leeds (www.xscape.co.uk). Or try the Snowdome in Tamworth, Staffordshire, which offers adrenaline-rush snow tubing and toddler snow play sessions (www.snowdome.co.uk).
- Visit a winter farmer's market together and get children searching for weirdest-shaped winter veg, the stickiest buns and the smelliest cheese.
- For younger children, fill a flask, pack an old bedsheet you don't mind getting mucky... and play at Lords and Ladies in the park, or the grounds of a stately home. The sheet will become a long dress or a swishy cape. Warning: accompanying adults have to do what the Lords and Ladies say.
- Now's the time to plant bulbs for beautiful splashes of colour in the spring. Plant ornamental frilly tulips, golden daffs and giant, purple-headed alliums.

And when the weather keeps you indoors

- Make a smoothie together. Blend half a glass of pressed apple juice with half a banana, 2 teaspoons of honey, 3 dates (stoned), 200g natural yoghurt and 20g of oats. Will keep two people bouncing with energy until lunchtime. For more smoothie ideas read the *Innocent Smoothie Recipe Book* (Fourth Estate).
- Homes can get stuffy on winter days when the windows are closed, and cooking and pet smells can linger on. Add a beautiful breath of fresh air with Febreze Fabric Refresher, which neutralises bad odours on items that are hard to wash: curtains, upholstery and even carpets. Make a quick spritz of Febreze Fabric Refresher part of your morning tidy-up and you will notice how much fresher and cleaner your home smells when you walk through the door at the end of the day.
- Bake a fragrant cake from Rose Carrarini's inspiring home baking book *Breakfast, Lunch and Tea* (Phaidon Press), which is full of sweet treats, but with recipes that have a little less sugar than other cookbooks.
- Just roll around and be silly. Little kids boost their development and their social skills from playing with people they love, research has shown. And it can help you relax and grow

closer too. Rough-and-tumble games will help them develop confidence and trust.

- Splash out indoors. Fill a basin with warm water and lots of floating toys and help smaller kids to squirt, fill and splash around. It's great for getting children attuned to different sensations.