



Summer Fun in Katy

What to Do with the Kids

It's a beautiful summer day, bright sun and no humidity. Your children are incredibly well behaved, having showered you with attention and gratitude as well as beverages and snacks all day. Doesn't sound familiar? Perhaps your typical summer day looks more like mine. Hot, humid, and since it's rained daily for the last two weeks your yard resembles something of a crop field. Your children are now limited to playing indoors, your sofa has been stripped and is now a seat less box, and every toy is scattered to the point there's no visible floor in sight. You've already survived two melt downs, and in half an hour they will be hungry and headed for the kitchen ... again. YIKES!

No worries though. Help is on the way! We've come up with some ideas to keep the kids happy this summer and help you keep your sanity.

By
Sunshine
Farris

Enroll Your Kids in Summer Camp

The Katy area boasts a vast array of summer camps to meet the needs and interests of every child. Cindy Nelson, Katy mother of three, plans one week of summer camp a month for her kids so they don't go stir crazy. "One of our favorites is the camp at Katy Visual & Performing Arts Center. I love sending my kids to KVPAC. I'm always impressed with what they've done with and for the kids," says Nelson.

For the working parent, or the parent who needs a longer break, try a full day summer camp. "CrossPoint Summer Slam is one of the few camps in the area that allows children as young as three to attend all summer long with camp hours from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.," says Jenifer McLuskie, Summer Slam Director.

Summer is a great time for kids to try out various sports and recreation camps. "I signed my kids up at Westwood Gymnastics Academy for a week-long camp," says Christie Sell, Katy mother of two. For kids with specific interests, Lifetime Fitness and the YMCA host camps in rock climbing, basketball, and cheerleading, as well as the traditional summer camp program.

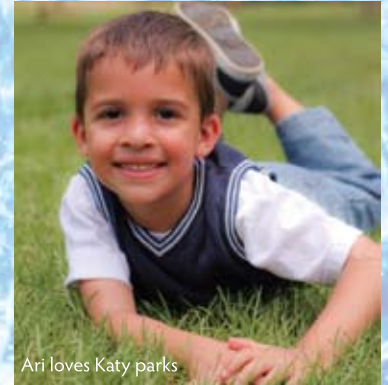
Grow Their Spiritual Side with Vacation Bible School

Every summer, local churches welcome children from all over Katy into their vacation bible school (VBS) programs. VBS provides a nurturing and warm environment for your child and teaches basic Christian principles in a fun and active setting. In most cases, you don't need to be a member of a specific church to enroll your child in VBS. VBS camps are usually free or charge a very small fee.



YMCA summer day camp fun

Photo by Lisa Mangos



Ari loves Katy parks



Feeding the ducks at Mary Jo Peckham Park

Photo by Lisa Mangos

www.thelittlegym.com





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Join a Play Group

Play groups provide moms and their kids with a terrific social outlet. While the kids play together, moms can make new friends or reconnect with old ones. Katy Explores, a local playgroup, offers planned fun throughout each week of summer. Recent play group locations for Katy Explores have been parks, farms, the zoo, museums, the symphony, and splash pads.



Photo by Lisa Mangos

Caleb and Elizabeth
at La Centerra

If you are up to the task, you can even organize your own play group. Rally neighboring moms, and take turns hosting or coming up with activities to do together. Doing so creates a sense of community, and you and the kids get to know your neighbors.

Go Fishing

Relieving summer boredom need not be all bells and whistles. Plan on scheduling some relaxing family activities that you and the kids can look forward to each week. "Summer evenings can be really nice here in Katy," comments Stephanie Dade. "My family loves to pack a picnic and head over to our neighborhood lake. The kids have a favorite shady spot where they can fish, and my husband and I just relax and catch up on the day together." Another getting-back-to-the-basics idea is family game night. Pick one night during the week, order pizza, and break out the board games. Kids learn how to be a good winner (and loser), and the uninterrupted family time will become cherished.



Photo by Lisa Mangos

Sue splashes in the fountains at La Centerra

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Elizabeth cools off

Vacation Bible Schools

CrossPoint

281-398-6464 • crosspt.org

Grace Fellowship UMC

281-646-1903 • whatisgrace.org

Kingsland Baptist

281-492-0785 • kingsland.org

Second Baptist Church

281-465-3408 • second.org

St. Peters UMC

281-492-8031 • stpeterskaty.org

Westland Baptist

281-392-5099 • westland.cc



Christian at Mommy and Me Classes

Summer Camps

CrossPoint Summer Camp

281-398-6464 • crosspt.org

Katy Visual & Performing Arts Center

281-829-2787 • kvpac.org

Lifetime Fitness

281-693-3434 • lifetimefitness.com

YMCA

281-392-5055 • ymcahouston.org/katy

Westwood Gymnastic Academy

281-347-2000 • westwoodgym.com

Playgroups

Katy Explores Yahoo Group

groups.yahoo.com/group/katyexplorers

Katy also boasts a number of terrific parks for families to visit anytime, but especially so in the summer. Jennifer Givens, mom of two girls and pregnant with twins says, "We really enjoy going to La Centerra, where the girls can play in the water fountains. We also like Mary Joe Peckham Park because we can fish and play putt-putt. Best yet, both are free!"

Make your goal this summer to have fun with the kids, and enjoy this time with them at home. This season of life will pass all too soon.

Check out KatyMagazine.com for more information on programs and activities for kids in the Katy area.

Sunshine Farris is a freelance writer for Katy Magazine. She lives in Katy with her husband and three young children.