

85 Fun Activities for Children and Teens

Feeling really sad, low in mood, or anxious, can have a big impact on activity levels and enjoyment. Children and young people who often feel sad, or low in mood, engage in very few activities that give them enjoyment, and a sense of achievement. Their low mood, or anxiety, can make them withdraw from other people, preferring to stay in their room, do quiet lonely activities, that are passive, like watching TV, playing video games, watching YouTube videos, or surfing the Internet.

When they are feeling down, it can be hard for them to decide or choose what to do, and they tend to want to do nothing. The list below gives ideas for fun activities, and you can make your own list by circling the things you like. Regularly planning fun activities, and completing tasks that give you a sense of achievement, are a powerful tool in lifting low mood, and sadness. I normally suggest two activities per day to do with others (parents/family/friends), and I ask that you to keep an eye on what happens to how you feel, what your mood is like when regularly you do things, and when you don't.

1. Blow bubbles
2. Fly a kite
3. Play a musical instrument
4. Build a toy car racetrack out of old boxes, tissue rolls
5. A water gun battle
6. A scavenger hunt
7. Hula-hooping
8. Learn a new skill as a family/friends, juggling, skateboarding, French braiding
9. Get your camera and take photos of anything you want, using different filters
10. Baking cakes or biscuits, find your favourite recipe
11. Go to your local pond and try to catch (and release) things you find there
12. Go on an alphabet treasure hunt, find things that begin with a letter you pick out of a bag
13. Have fun relay races. Hopping on one foot, walking backwards, galloping
14. Have an indoor or outdoor picnic lunch or dinner
15. See who can build the tallest tower using blocks or Lego bricks
16. Rifle through the dress-up bin and have a photo shoot with any mixture of outfits
17. Set up a tent in the living room, get some snacks, turn off the lights, get a movie on a tablet/computer
18. Have an animal sound contest, see which animal sounds different people make, blindfold people, see if they can guess who made the sound

19. Learn how to do yo-yo tricks
20. Have a day out at the beach
21. Have a family/friends game night Monopoly, Scrabble and Pictionary
22. Get some clay, have fun sculpting things
23. Collect things from your local park to make a collage, you can paint it, or leave it natural
24. Make a baking soda volcano, put a bit of white vinegar into a plastic cup, add a tablespoon of baking soda and watch the explosion
25. Play/learn a card game
26. Go out on your bicycles, find a local trail
27. Have an opposite's day and eat breakfast for dinner, wear your clothes inside out, yes means no!
28. Play dominoes
29. Sing along loud to your favourite songs, find the words on the internet
30. Get on a karaoke game/machine, or use YouTube to sing along
31. Play statue dancing, freezing when the music stops
32. Throw a balloon into the air, see how long you can keep it up there, without it touching the floor
33. Build a fort using cushions, blankets and old sheets
34. Make a scrapbook of your favourite things, adding things to it regularly
35. Play with bouncy balls
36. Play dodge ball
37. Get a pot, plant some seeds, you choose which ones
38. Practice making shadow figures on a wall using your hands
39. Disguise your voice and prank call mum or dad
40. Dig up rocks or stones to see who lives underneath
41. If the weather is nice, lie outside, watch the clouds, and try to pick out shapes
42. Have a visit to the library
43. Find a recipe for dinner, make it with help from a grown up
44. Read a book
45. Have a home make-up session
46. Do some drawing or colouring
47. Have a play date with a friend of your choice
48. Play dress up together (parents included)
49. Go swimming (indoor or outdoor)
50. Listen and dance to loud music together

51. Plan a visit to a museum
52. Book a free makeover at a department store
53. Visit a pet shop
54. Write and post a letter to someone special
55. Go for a walk, take some snacks and drinks
56. Have a look at your old baby photos
57. Go ice skating
58. Have a hugging session
59. Talk about what makes you special, what do people like about you?
60. See a movie
61. Do a puzzle
62. Play a sport together, like tennis
63. Make homemade pizza
64. Play hide and seek
65. Go for a train ride
66. Try horseback riding
67. Climb a tree
68. Have a family talent show
69. Get wet in the rain
70. Go to the theatre
71. Play Frisbee
72. Talk about pocket money, saving, budgeting
73. Visit a relative or friend
74. Visit your neighbours
75. Go bowling
76. Play Simon Says
77. Find a collection of jokes on the internet, tell them to others
78. Play football
79. Go to the park
80. Go to a new park
81. Visit a farm
82. Walk your dog
83. Go on your trampoline
84. Have a pamper session
85. Make a list of other things you want to do