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# 50+ Ways to Get Your Kids Off Their Device and into Holidays

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The summer holidays pose a real challenge for some parents in terms of getting kids off the couch. It is relatively easy to get young kids out to play, but teenagers are a bit more difficult.

When teenagers are sitting around using their devices, it is often out of habit. It's not always about not wanting to do anything else. So, here's some suggestions to get them up and about.



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## Get Physical

- Snorkelling
- Rock climbing at a climbing gym or outdoors
- Surfing
- Geocaching is a treasure hunt with something for everyone. Using map coordinates and a GPS enabled device, you can find a geocache near your home, in the city, in the bush or in Antarctica. Have a look at the [website here](#)
- The Skate Park
- Fishing
- Surf cat
- Sailing
- The gym... Most gyms are very flexible, you can buy short monthly to half yearly memberships.
- Couch to 5km app [running program](#)
- [Fitbit Challenges](#) are a fun, competitive way of getting kids to increase their activity levels
- Golf - There are lots of public golf courses, just look for the one closest to home.
- Mountain biking



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## Back to Nature

- Australia is beaches. It's a no-brainer
- Bush walks. Look for your state's best walks and hikes. Send your teen out with a couple of friends and pick them up at the end.
- Plant a vege patch
- Spend some time as a family at your local swimming/picnic spots
- Horse riding

## Christmas Responsibilities

Give each child a responsibility for Xmas. For example, have them find a good recipe for a salad, slice or dessert. Have them shop for the ingredients and then have a test run before Christmas.

## Chores

- Walk the dog twice a day, but suggest they double up with a friend and walk their dogs together
- Create a roster for cooking meals. Make it competitive by making it a Masterchef competition.
- Give each child one area (on top of their own room) to spring clean.
- Set the Declutter Challenge
- Challenge them to go through their wardrobe and get rid of anything that doesn't fit or that they will never wear again and then take it all to a charity shop.
- Weeding. At this time of the year there is plenty to go around. Appoint a section of the garden to each family member and see who has a green thumb.

## Book in Some Special Events

Every family member puts an idea for an activity on a piece of paper and puts it in a jar. Once a week you draw out an activity that everyone must participate in. Put in some parameters! Include things like outdoor movies and fish and chips on the foreshore for dinner.

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## Short Courses

There are so many holiday programs available to teens. I love the idea of kids trying something new. Often adolescents start to narrow their range of hobbies and skills at a time in their life when they should be expanding them.

- Arts Centres
- Film Schools
- Photography courses
- Jewellery making
- Cooking
- Vacswim – practical water safety, lifesaving & first aid skills are a must for every teenager who is around water.
- Circus Skills at Circus School





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## Get a Job

Being paid is a terrific incentive to put down the game controller. It is also a great way to teach the value of money. When kids have a job, they take instructions from someone other than their parents and teachers. They learn that society has expectations of them. It also starts the process of integration into the adult world.



## Be creative

- Writing
- Painting
- Renovate an old piece of furniture
- Origami
- Create a dance with friends
- Create photo books
- Make candles...these could double as Christmas gifts

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- Make a movie with friends, siblings or cousins
  - Get started on submissions for some competitions. Eg. In Australia, The Tim Winton Young Writers' Award or the Shaun Tan Award for Young Artists

## Read and Research

- Try your City council library for holiday programs.
- Enrol in the [Summer Reading Club](#)
- Research the family tree

## Family Time

The participation of parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles can be a vital ingredient in getting kids off the couch.

- Get grandparents involved in teaching kids something new and spending time with them. Equally as valuable is getting your teens to teach their grandparents something new...maybe how to send emails, Skype or join Facebook.
- Spend time with cousins
- Plan a pamper day for extended family
- Tech-free family time
- Card and board games inside on a stinking hot afternoon
- Family sport, like basketball or cricket, that involves all the adults and children in your extended family can become one of those great rituals that you all look forward to every holiday.
- Book in a few one on one dates with your teenager doing something simple that you both like. It may be something as little as: a morning at the beach, or a morning tea together or Christmas shopping.

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## Kids in the Kitchen

- Bake cupcakes and design toppings
- Run a Masterchef competition

## Volunteering

There are countless organisations who would appreciate your teen's help. Send them with a friend so that it isn't quite so daunting.

