

Total Nutrition

Autumn Adventure Fun With The Family

(NAPSA)—Summer is over, and my kids are back in school, but that doesn't mean getting outside is out of the question. Sunny and cool autumn days are invigorating and perfect for a family game of football or other favorite ways to combine fitness and fun.

Explore nature. A tree-filled local park is the perfect place to enjoy a pleasant autumn day. Find a park with nature trails to explore—many parks and arboretums (places that grow and teach



Mindy Hermann

about trees and plants) have maps and trail guides for locating different types of trees and plants. Collect oak and maple leaves, acorns and helicopter seeds. Play classic park or backyard games like croquet, whiffle ball, Frisbee, tag, volleyball, and kickball.

Visit your local library before you head outdoors. Learn how birds, animals and insects prepare for the winter. While you're there, look for kid-friendly nature guides that include stickers and pages to color, a great way to keep little ones busy in the car.

Observe migrating birds and explore water life. Many areas of the country have locations within driving distance that serve as layovers for migrating birds (or insects in the case of the Monarch butterfly). Grab a pair of binoculars and catch nature in action in person instead of sitting on the couch watching television. Visit a local tide pool, pond, stream, or river to look for water animals, insects, and birds. Remember to wear old shoes—feet will get wet and muddy! Remind kids to be extremely quiet so that the wildlife doesn't run or fly away.

Explore a National Park. Take a walking tour with a Park Ranger. Tours usually are free or

Total Trail Mix

- 4 cups Total Raisin Bran, Total Corn Flakes, or Whole Grain Total
- 1/3 cup sliced almonds
- 1 1/2 cups chopped dried fruit

Toss all ingredients in a large bowl. Store in an airtight container.



low-cost and include activities geared toward school-age children.

Explore activities in your town. Check out bicycle trails in kid-friendly locales like parks and rail trails (paved over railroad tracks for biking and walking). Hit tennis balls at your town or school courts; little ones may even be able to ride tricycles on an empty court.

Explore ways to fuel your family activities with good food. Start the day with a balanced breakfast, like Total cereal topped with summer berries and milk or a breakfast parfait of layered yogurt, breakfast cereal, and cut fruit. Avoid snacking in the car. "It is messy, can distract the driver, and encourages constant nibbling," says Ann Coulston, M.S., R.D., a nutrition expert in Palo Alto, California. "Instead, pack a lunch in the cooler, find a picnic spot at a rest stop or shady grassy area, get out of the car, stretch your legs and move around, and enjoy your meal."

Dear Mindy,

Q. What should we bring to eat?

A. For walks and hikes, pack a sealable plastic bag with homemade trail mix made from Total cereal, dried fruit, and nuts. Sandwiches, cut vegetables, fruit, and cookies travel well for picnics. Keep cold foods cold to prevent spoilage. Freeze water in one-liter soft drink bottles; use to keep the cooler cool and for ice-cold drinking water as it melts.