



Ready, Set, Summer!

OhioRISE Guide to a Healthy, Happy Summer



Summer is here! Use this checklist to explore fun activities, and adaptable ideas for all children and youth, including autism friendly and sensory-considerate options, so your family can enjoy a safe, flexible, and fun summer.

☐ **Build a daily routine.**

Summer routines may look different from the school year, but a simple daily schedule with meals, activities, fun, and built-in breaks can help children feel supported. If your child is in OhioRISE, you can work with your care coordinator and Child and Family Team to create a plan.

☐ **Find summer child care that works for your family.**

Use the Ohio Department of Children and Youth's (DCY) [Child Care Search Tool](#) to find options that meet your family's needs.

☐ **Grab a free meal for your youth from your local SUN Meals location.**

The Ohio Department of Education & Workforce (DEW) offers healthy summer meals for ages 1 to 18 at [locations across the state](#).

☐ **Find extra food resources nearby.**

Use [FreshTrak](#) to help you find food help in your community, like food pantries, meal programs, and other local services that can help meet your family's needs.

☐ **Plan time with a trusted adult.**

Plan regular one-on-one time with a trusted adult; even a few quiet minutes to talk, play, read, draw, or walk can help your child feel safe, supported, and comfortable sharing their feelings.

☐ **Make a comfort kit.**

Make a small comfort kit for trips or busy days with items like headphones, fidgets, snacks, water, and a favorite item to help your child feel calm and use the supports that work best for them.

☐ **Explore sensory-friendly fun in your community.**

Look for sensory-friendly movie times, museum hours, library programs, or community events, choosing quieter times or familiar places. Let your child pick from a couple options, start small, and head home early if needed – even a short, happy visit can be a big win!

☐ **Try something new.**

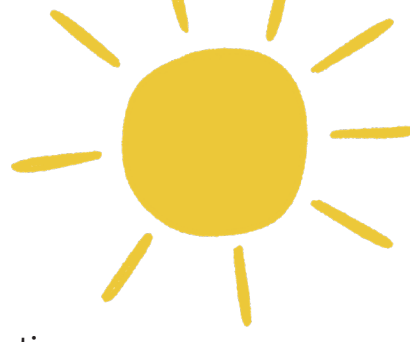
Summer is a great time to learn new skills, find hobbies, and build confidence. Try fun activities like cooking or baking simple recipes using familiar foods, or planting a small garden with herbs, flowers, or easy vegetables. Help your child get ready for new activities by showing pictures or using a first-then plan, like: "First we go to the library, then we get a snack." Focus on having fun and being together, not on doing things perfectly.

☐ **Participate in outdoor activities at your local park.**

Cut back on screen time and make time for play, creativity, and outdoor fun by visiting state parks and trails near you. Use the [Ohio Department of Natural Resources Events Calendar](#) to find free, engaging activities held at parks in your community.

☐ **Explore the world of animals.**

Visit a farm, aquarium, pet store, or spend time with a family pet. Spending time with animals can help children and youth feel safe, calm, and more connected.



☐ **Get moving daily.**

Plan daily movement time to help your child feel calm and focused, using activities like swinging, stretching, trampoline time, scooter rides, or yoga.

☐ **Join Team Tressel's Summer Fitness Challenge.**

Take on **Team Tressel's Summer Fitness Challenge** to set goals for staying active, building healthy habits, and spending time together. Print or download the **Summer 2026 Team Tressel's Fitness Challenge** to get started!

☐ **Get creative with sensory-friendly crafts.**

Try playful, hands-on sensory activities like squishing play dough, scooping kinetic sand, exploring water beads, stretching slime, or making textured crafts. You can even make playdough with simple ingredients you may already have at home by following recipe videos like **HGTV's Best Homemade Play Dough Recipe**. These calming, creative activities can help your child regulate emotions while having fun. As a fun extra fact, the original Play-Doh was invented in Cincinnati, Ohio!

☐ **Make some music together.**

Turn up the fun with music activities like dance parties, drumming, karaoke, or building a family playlist together. Music is a playful way for your child to express themselves, shake out some energy, and make happy family memories.

☐ **Join a summer reading challenge.**

Find your local library with the State Library of Ohio's **Public Library Search Tool** and jump into a summer reading challenge! Then, keep the summer reading fun going with programs from your local Pizza Hut, Barnes and Noble, Half-Price Books, and Chuck E. Cheese. Local libraries are also a great place to find free family activities!

☐ **Build new skills for school and work.**

For young people ages 14 and older, explore the **Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Program** (CCMEP). CCMEP helps low-income young adults build job skills and get ready for the future.

☐ **Plan a summer adventure in Ohio.**

Check out Ohio Tourism's list of **100 Things To Do this Summer in Ohio**. From family fun events to hidden Ohio gems, there are so many ways to explore, play, and make memories all summer long in Ohio.

☐ **Join in on America 250 celebrations across Ohio.**

Did you know that the United States of America turns 250 this year? Ohio is ready to celebrate with plenty of exciting events across the state. From festivals and historical reenactments to art exhibitions and civic conversations, there's something for everyone to enjoy. Join in on the celebration by exploring the **America 250 Ohio Events Calendar** to find an event near you.

☐ **Celebrate family wins!**

Celebrate every family win, no matter how small. This could be trying something new, staying for a little longer, or using a coping skill. Remember that a calm, happy day at home can also be a special summer memory. When you cheer on your child or youth, it helps them feel proud, build confidence, and keep trying.

If your child is already in OhioRISE, talk with your care coordinator and Child and Family Team (CFT) to keep the conversation going and help your family plan for a healthy, happy, and successful summer.

Where can I get help or more information on OhioRISE?

To learn more about OhioRISE, including the OhioRISE program services:

Visit managedcare.medicaid.ohio.gov/OhioRISE or AetnaBetterHealth.com/OhioRISE.

Call OhioRISE Member Services at **833-711-0773 (TTY: 711)** Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.