

Deep Run Summer Fun Ideas 2023

The students are so excited for summer to begin, but after the first week, you may find that your children are getting restless and needing some structure to their days. Below is a collection of great ideas and resources to keep children busy and engaged all summer long. Happy Summer! We can't wait to hear about all your adventures next year.

Camps

When you're looking at a ten-week long summer, you may want at least one week to be planned for you. There are a variety of camps offered each week in our area. Most camps provide before and after care for parents who work outside of the home and many can be half or full-day. Half-day camps cost less and still give your child the benefit of skill-building and socialization with peers.

Although camps can be expensive, [scholarships are available](#). Here are links to scholarship pages for Howard County Parks and Rec, the Columbia Association (discounts of 50-70%) and the YMCA.

<https://www.howardcountymd.gov/recreation-parks/programs#financial-assistance>

<https://www.columbiaassociation.org/membership/membership-information/membership-programs/>

https://ymaryland.org/sites/default/files/2023-01/2023OpenDoorsFormfill_011623ENG.pdf

Swimming

1. There are some beautiful swimming facilities in the area, but if you want to stay home and enjoy some free fun, try having the kids wash the car, play in the sprinkler, draw with sidewalk chalk and erase it with water, or have a water balloon fight!
2. The Columbia Association offers "Play" memberships that include the pools, tennis, ice skating, and mini golf. There is a sliding scale membership available for income-qualified families. At full fee, the membership for a family costs \$79 for non-Columbia residents and \$43 for Columbia residents.
<https://www.columbiaassociation.org/membership/membership-information/membership-pricing/>
3. Howard County Parks and Recreation offers swimming, fitness facilities and indoor rock climbing at the Roger Carter Center for a daily fee of \$5.00 per person. Fit4U membership including Roger Carter, Gary J. Arthur, and North Laurel Community Centers for ages 3-12 years 1 month \$15, 3 months \$35. Fit4U membership ages 13-49 1 month \$40, 3 months \$105. Open Swim M-F 12-5pm, Sat & Sun 12:30-3:30 & 4-7

<https://www.howardcountymd.gov/recreation-parks/roger-carter-community-center>

4. Camping, Fishing, Hiking, Picnicking, Climbing, Swimming, Boating, Junior Rangers Programs – are all free or have a nominal entrance fee at our beautiful Maryland State Parks. Our closest state Park, Patapsco, is only ten minutes away by car. Here is summer program information <https://dnr.maryland.gov/publiclands/Pages/outdooreduc.aspx>. Plan your trip by visiting the website.
<http://dnr.maryland.gov/publiclands/Pages/default.aspx>
5. Maryland is not known for its lakes, but we do have some beautiful ones! Check out the site below for the “Ten Best Swimming Holes” in Maryland.
<http://www.onlyinyourstate.com/maryland/swimming-holes-md/>

Library Activities

1. We are lucky to have some beautiful libraries in our county! Check out the renovated Elkridge Branch. You can take a DIY class and then borrow the equipment to do a project at home! Here is the link for classes and events and the summer reading program.
https://howardcounty.librarycalendar.com/?age_groups%5B116%5D=116&age_groups%5B117%5D=117&branches%5B100%5D=100
<http://hclibrary.org/summer/>
Encourage your child to join the summer reading program and take a class. Make it a weekly visit!
2. Baltimore County Public Libraries have a hands-on learning area called “Storyville” at their Woodlawn Branch for children birth to age 5. It is definitely worth the trip! Check it out here: <https://www.bcpl.info/youth/storyville.html>

Community Centers

1. The North Laurel Community Center offers drop-in recreation programs. Here is the link: <https://www.howardcountymd.gov/nlcc>
2. The Roger Carter Recreation Center has swimming, rock climbing and fitness facilities. Drop-in passes are \$5.00 per person for ages 3 and up.
<https://www.howardcountymd.gov/rccc>
3. The Robinson Nature Center makes a nice day trip, including interactive exhibits for children and outdoor walking trails. \$5.00 for adults and \$3.00 for children.
<https://www.howardcountymd.gov/Robinson>

Playgrounds

Howard County is home to some pretty amazing playgrounds. Blandair has 2 playgrounds and Centennial has 4! Meadowbrook has a large playground for a variety of ages and abilities.

<https://www.howardcountymd.gov/recreation-parks/parks>

Free Concerts, Movies and Family Nights

1. Colorburst Park Summer Series has free concerts, children's programs, exercise programs and a splash pad open 10am-10pm all summer.
<https://merriweatherdistrict.com/whats-on/color-burst-park-summer-series-2022/>
2. 2023 Columbia Lakefront Live Series and 4th of July Fireworks
<https://columbiaassociation.org/annual-events/lakefront-live/>
3. Free concerts, movies, storytime and more in Old Ellicott City:
<https://visitoldellicottcity.com/events/>
4. Free Summer Concert Series at Centennial Park:
<https://www.howardcountymd.gov/summer-concerts>
5. There are \$2 summer movies at Regal Snowden Square:
<https://www.regmovies.com/static/en/us/promotions/summer-movie-express>
6. \$1.50 per person movies and \$1 off kids snack packs at Cinemark at the Arundel Mills Mall:
https://www.cinemark.com/series-events-info-pages/summer-movie-clubhouse?cjevent=e3e90ccbe68911ec83df96550a82b82a&utm_source=cj-affiliate&utm_medium=affiliate&utm_content=Skimlinks&cjdata=MXxOfDB8WXww
7. Star Parties at Alpha Ridge Park: Enjoy the night sky through telescopes set up by the Howard Astronomical League in HAL's Observatory Free June 24, July 22 & August 26 dusk until about 11:00 pm. <https://www.howardastro.org/starparties.php>.

Free Museums

1. The Walters Art Museum in Baltimore is free to the public and has a children's play area in the basement and free art projects for kids every week (Check Covid restrictions and availability). <https://thewalters.org>
2. The Baltimore Museum of Art has "Free Family Sundays at Home" with art projects for kids and families to do together. <https://artbma.org/learn/free-family-sundays/>. There are also many free family activities available at the BMA <https://artbma.org/events>.
3. The Smithsonian Institute in Washington DC is the world's largest museum and research complex. All museums are free to the public and increasingly have hands-on learning areas for children.
<https://www.si.edu/>

Summer Food & Resources

1. Howard County Public School System free summer meal program will be served weekdays, Wednesday, June 21 through Friday, Aug. 4 from 12:30-2 p.m. at multiple locations including DRES. No meals July 4th.
<https://www.hcpss.org/food-services/summer-meals/#:~:text=Meals%20will%20be%20provided%20at,participating%20in%20HCPSS%20summer%20programs>.
2. The CARE Center's CARE Line is a FREE information and referral service for people who have questions about children in Howard County. CARE Center staff work with families to identify their needs and help find solutions. For assistance, call 410-313-CARE (410-313-2273). <https://www.howardcountymd.gov/children-families/care-line>
3. Parent's Guide to Howard County
<https://www.howardcountymd.gov/sites/default/files/2023-02/OCF.ParentsGuide2023.pdf>
4. Howard County Food Bank
<https://cac-hc.org/food-assistance/>
5. The Howard County MultiService Center (MSC)
Assistance with connecting to resources within our community. Call 410-313-0220 for assistance. The MSC Food Pantry provides pre-packaged in "grab and go" bags and is open Mondays and Wednesdays, noon to 4:00 p.m. and the third Saturday of the month, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
<https://www.howardcountymd.gov/community-partnerships/multiservice-center>

Looking for Something else? Here are some ideas:

<https://columbiamd.macaronikid.com/>

<https://www.thepennyhoarder.com/smart-money/100-free-summer-activities/>