# in & out

**Cabin fever remedies for every age.**

By Aleigh Acerni

## baby

**INDOORS: SWIMMING**

Head to the local indoor pool for a great way to get in some exercise when the weather outside is frightful; add baby swimming lessons (which typically start when baby is around six months old) or an afternoon of splish-splashing and it's a great way to get some quality time, too.

**OUTDOORS: EXPLORE**

There are plenty of new things for baby to look at during the winter—icicles, leafless trees, sparkly white snow. Bundle up your bundle of joy, and take her for a gentle ride on a sled, or let her explore the snow at her own pace. Just be sure to head indoors when you start to feel chilled, change her out of her play clothes and snuggle up to those adorably rosy cheeks.

## toddler

**INDOORS: OBSTACLE COURSE**

Using pillows, blankets and chairs, create a makeshift obstacle course for your little one, then cheer her on as she scrambles from one end to the other. It's a great way to encourage physical activity while also getting her to work on coordination and balance. If she starts to get bored, get out your watch and challenge her to see how fast she can make it through!

**OUTDOORS: SNOW PAINTING**

Encourage your toddler's inner Jackson Pollack. Fill squeeze bottles or spray bottles with warm water dyed with food coloring. Then head outside to "paint" the snow. Don't forget to take pictures of your masterpieces before the snow melts!

## kid

**INDOORS: CHARADES**

It's a classic for a reason: Write down people, actions, favorite movie characters or anything that can be acted out, onto strips of paper. Then, crumple them up, mix them up in a bowl, and have your kid choose one and act it out—bonus points if you can sneak in some words from next week's vocabulary test. (Hint: This works well with pictures from magazines, also, which is a good way to get younger non-readers in on the action.)

> "Nature trail walks are our favorite. Bring a coloring pad and crayons and draw everything and anything you see. A walk in the woods is always good for the spirit—and a great way to calm a wild child.
>
> *—Michelle Register, Atlanta, GA*
> *Mother of Collin, 5 yrs*

**OUTDOORS: ANIMAL TRACKING**

Fresh snow? Grab the camera, bundle up and head outdoors to look for tracks left behind by animals—when you find them, take pictures and then head home to search the Internet for animal tracks pictures to match up what you found with the animal who left them behind. Pretty soon you'll be able to recognize them without having to look them up!

## tween

**INDOORS: VOLUNTEER**

Winter is the perfect time of year to volunteer at a local homeless shelter or soup kitchen—and it's a great way to give an angst-y tween a little perspective. Even if you encounter some grumbling at the start, it's hard to maintain a bad 'tude when you're doing something good for your community.

**OUTDOORS: GEOCACHING**

We'll be really surprised if the phrase "hidden treasures" doesn't get your tween excited, and geocaching is a fun treasure-hunting activity that's educational and the perfect remedy for a raging case of cabin fever. All you need is a GPS and a sense of adventure. (Although bringing along a snack couldn't hurt.) Check out geocaching.com for tips and a primer on getting started.

## teen

**INDOORS: COOKING**

Cook together! It's an easy way to encourage healthy eating habits, give her a little extra responsibility, and build a sense of accomplishment—plus, the kitchen skills she learns now will be put to good use once she's out of the nest. If your teen wants to add more dishes to her repertoire, there are some great cookbooks out there for fledgling chefs. Two to try: *Eat Fresh Food: Awesome Recipes for Teen Chefs* and *Cooking Up a Storm: The Teen Survival Cookbook.*

**OUTDOORS: HIKING**

There's still a lot of fun to be had outdoors when cooler temperatures arrive—just dress in layers (so you can shed some once you get warmed up), and head to your favorite hiking trails to breathe in some fresh, crisp winter air. Bonus: All that exercise gives you a great excuse to celebrate the season with two treats that are loved by kids of all ages—hot chocolate and s'mores!