

How to Create a Fun Activity Passport for Children

by Pamela Fay

When children are out of school, here's a plan to keep them engaged, even productive, without getting on a plane. If you don't have a travel budget, you can still use a passport. You can create one in no time at all. It will keep your little ones active and channel their energies in any direction you choose.

Materials needed:

- One sheet of white 9" by 12" drawing paper
- One sheet of 9" by 12" colored construction paper or card stock
- Scissors
- Hole punch
- Ribbon or yarn
- Crayons or colored pencils
- Assorted small stickers, stamps or templates in 16 designs
- Wallet sized school photo (optional)

Step 1: Assemble the passport. Cut the white paper lengthwise and crosswise into four equal sized four rectangles. Cut the construction paper crosswise in half. Keep one piece of colored construction paper for the cover. Retain the other piece for your next project. Stack the white pieces of paper on top of the colored cover. Fold the paper crosswise to make a passport booklet. The passport should have 16 pages not including the cover. Make two holes near the fold of the passport. Lace the ribbon through the holes and tie in a knot to secure. Take care not to tie too tightly or the paper will bunch. You want the passport to open freely. (If you are making the passport for older children, you can open the booklet and staple along the center fold instead.) Have the children draw a boat, plane, car or train on the front cover and label it, for example, "Emily's Activity Passport." On the first page, write in the child's citizenship country, city of birth, and gender just like a real passport. Paste the child's photo to the page.

Step 2: Generate a list of passport activities. You could plan the passport around a theme, like reading, for example. This does not mean that all of the activities have to be books. Use your imagination--kids can help, too--to come up with creative ideas. One reading activity could be a trip to the local city library. Or, they can read and follow a simple recipe. You can also plan the activities around a theme like water fun or making crafts or visiting new places or even trying new foods. Children are very creative. They can help come up with activities they will really enjoy. You will need 15 activities.

Here are some additional themes:

- Tour city services: Visit your local fire station, police station, city hall, traffic court
- Get a dose of culture: Visit museums, symphony, local theater
- Earn a "scout badge: Build a milk carton bird house, plant a tree, learn to row a boat
- Strengthen family ties: Interview your grandmother, help your cousin learn to ride a bike, invite your big brother for tea.

- Be a good neighbor: Volunteer at a soup kitchen, help your neighbor rake leaves, pick up trash on your block

Step 3: Assign an activity to each of the remaining 15 pages. Write the activity on the page and decorate it with an image that is related to the activity. Be sure to leave room for the “stamp.”

Step 4: When the kids need something to do, open the passport and pick an activity. They can be done in any order. Once the activity is completed, stamp the page. When the passport is filled out, make a new one.

References

http://parentchildcrafts.suite101.com/article.cfm/summer_fun_passport
Summer Fun Passport, Denise Bertacchi