



GO FISH! PLANNING A SAFE FAMILY FISHING ADVENTURE

Engaging in recreational activities together as a family is valuable time spent. Fishing is a popular form of outdoor recreation this time of year. Fishing with your children can offer benefits to both mental and physical health, while strengthening family connection and teaching life skills. It is important that water safety precautions are in place and children are always supervised to ensure everyone has a safe and enjoyable time.



WHY FISHING?

Research suggests that children benefit from the opportunity to play outdoors, where they can explore and enjoy natural environments.¹ Access to green space is associated with improved mental well-being, overall health, and cognitive development of children. It promotes attention restoration, memory, competence, supportive social groups, self-discipline, moderates stress, improves behaviors and symptoms of ADHD and was even associated with higher standardized test scores.⁴

According to the 2018 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans Advisory Committee Scientific Report, “Opportunities to encourage the adoption of lifetime physical activities (e.g., leisure-time pursuits, noncompetitive sports) should be encouraged among all youth. This could help youth identify activities during childhood that they could enjoy and participate in across the lifespan, including outside of school.”

Most think of fishing as a relaxing, leisurely activity, and while true that fishing is considered a light-intensity physical activity, research suggests that even bouts of less-intense movement are beneficial to health. Fishing can be made a more physically active pursuit by wading into the water or repeatedly casting a line, and many fishing spots require some walking, hiking, or paddling to access.

According to the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, the essentials for fishing are simple: *“A stick and string or inexpensive rod and reel, a supply of small hooks and weights and a few bobbers are all that is needed. Even the bait can be simple by using cheap pantry items like corn, lunchmeat, or bread. Keep it simple and as you gain experience, experiment with advanced techniques and equipment.*

Laura DeWitt originally authored this article.

Need more information?

The Fishing Guide from Nebraska Game and Parks is a great resource that addresses all aspects of fishing in public waterways in Nebraska, available: <https://bit.ly/2MdVgHh>

Other useful links related to fishing:

- Area Guides on Where to Fish, including Family-Friendly Lakes: <http://outdoornebraska.gov/wheretofish>
- Fishing Permits: <https://www.fws.gov/fishing/FishingLicense.html>
- Rules and Regulations <http://outdoornebraska.gov/fishing>
- Fishing in Nebraska Schools (FiNS): <http://outdoornebraska.gov/fins>
- Water Safety for Children: <https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/water-safety.html>

For more information check out Family Fun on the Run: <https://go.unl.edu/familyfun>

Sources:

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