

■ Ultimate 2025 Summer Survival Guide for Single Parents

Your Free Nationwide Resource for Affordable Camps, Meals, Childcare & Community Support

■■ Affordable & Free Summer Camps

YMCA & YWCA Camps: Offer day and overnight camps with sliding-scale fees and scholarships. <https://www.ymca.org/what-we-do/youth-development/camp>

Salvation Army Summer Camps: Provide free or low-cost camps focusing on outdoor activities and personal growth for children from low-income households. <https://www.salvationarmyusa.org/usn/kids-camps/>

Local Parks & Recreation Departments: Many offer affordable summer programs, with some providing financial assistance or free options in low-income neighborhoods. <https://www.nrpa.org/our-work/Three-Pillars/social-equity/>

Faith-Based Camps: Churches and other religious institutions often host Vacation Bible Schools and other camps, sometimes free or at low cost. <https://www.vbspro.events/>

Boy Scouts & Girl Scouts Camps: Offer day and overnight camps with financial assistance available; membership not always required. <https://www.scouting.org/> | <https://www.girlscouts.org/>

■ Summer Meal Programs

SUN Bucks (Summer EBT): Provides \$120 per eligible school-age child for groceries during summer months. <https://www.fns.usda.gov/summer/sunbucks>

Summer Food Service Program (SFSP): Offers free meals to children 18 and under at approved sites nationwide. <https://www.fns.usda.gov/summer/sitefinder>

Local Food Banks: Many provide summer meal programs and food assistance. <https://www.feedingamerica.org/find-your-local-foodbank>

■ Childcare & Family Support

Child Care Aware® of America: Offers resources to find affordable childcare options and financial assistance programs. <https://www.childcareaware.org/>

Head Start & Early Head Start: Provide free early childhood education, health, and nutrition services. <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/center-locator>

Local Community Action Agencies: Offer various services including childcare assistance, housing support, and more. <https://communityactionpartnership.com/find-a-cap/>

■■ Housing & Financial Assistance

HUD Rental Assistance: Provides affordable housing options and rental assistance programs. https://www.hud.gov/topics/rental_assistance

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF): Offers financial help and support services for low-income families. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/map/about/help-families>

Local Nonprofits: Organizations like United Way offer various assistance programs. <https://www.unitedway.org/find-your-united-way>

■ Educational & Career Resources

Federal Student Aid (FAFSA): Apply for grants and loans to support your education. <https://studentaid.gov/>

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA): Provides job training and employment services. <https://www.careeronestop.org/>

Local Community Colleges: Often offer free or low-cost summer courses and training programs. <https://www.aacc.nche.edu/college-finder/>

■ Employment & Community Networks

Single Moms Job Network: A platform dedicated to connecting single mothers with job opportunities, career resources, and a supportive community. <https://singlemomsjobnetwork.com/>

Single Moms Society: An organization offering resources, support groups, and events tailored for single mothers to thrive personally and professionally. <https://singlemomssociety.com/>

■■ Kids Eat Free & Discounted Dining Options

BurgerFi (Mondays): One free kid's meal with the purchase of an adult meal.

Cody's Original Roadhouse (Mondays): Kids 10 and under eat free with an adult entrée.

Genghis Grill (Mondays): Kids dine for \$1.99 after 4 p.m. with an adult meal.

MCL Restaurant & Bakery (Mondays): Up to two free kids' meals per adult entrée.

Bob Evans (Tuesdays): Free kids' meal with adult entrée via app (limit three per order).

Denny's (Tuesdays): Free kids' meal from 4–10 p.m. with adult meal.

Marie Callender's (Tuesdays): Kids 12 and under eat free with adult entrée.

Luby's (Wednesdays & Saturdays): Kids 10 and under eat free with adult entrée.

Chevy's Fresh Mex (Wednesdays): Kids' meals for \$1 with adult entrée.

Piccadilly (Thursdays): Kids' meals for \$1.99 with adult meal (limit two per adult).

Ruby Tuesday (Fridays): Free kids' meal after 5 p.m. with adult entrée.

Dickey's Barbecue Pit (Sundays): Kids 12 and under eat free with \$10 adult meal.

Freebirds World Burrito (Sundays): Free kids' meal with adult entrée; use code KIDSEATFREE online.

Tumbleweed Tex Mex Grill (Sundays): Kids 10 and under eat free with adult meal.

■ 15 Healthy & Cheap Summer Meal Ideas for Kids

- Peanut Butter Banana Wraps
- Mini Pizza Bagels
- DIY Snack Boxes (cheese cubes, grapes, crackers)
- Turkey Hummus Rollups
- Apple Nachos (sliced apples with peanut butter drizzle and granola)
- Veggie Quesadillas
- Yogurt Parfaits (layers of yogurt, fruit, and granola)
- Homemade Trail Mix (nuts, dried fruits, whole-grain cereal)
- Egg Muffins (baked eggs with veggies in muffin tins)
- Smoothie Popsicles (blended fruit smoothies frozen in molds)
- Cucumber Sandwiches (cucumber & cream cheese on whole-grain bread)
- Baked Sweet Potato Fries
- Chicken and Veggie Skewers
- Overnight Oats (oats soaked overnight with milk and fruit)
- Homemade Veggie Chips (baked kale or zucchini slices)

■ 100 No-Cost Activities for Bored Kids

- Backyard Camping
- DIY Obstacle Course
- Scavenger Hunt
- Nature Walks
- Rock Painting
- Sidewalk Chalk Art
- Water Balloon Toss
- DIY Bird Feeders (recycled materials)
- Leaf Rubbings
- Cloud Watching & Shape Games
- Star Gazing with Constellation Apps
- Storytelling Circle (take-turn tales)
- Sock Puppet Show
- Read-a-thon (challenge family members)
- Paper Airplane Contest
- No-Bake Cookie Creations
- Homemade Playdough (flour-salt recipe)
- Origami Animals

- Recyclable Crafts (toilet-paper-roll binoculars, etc.)
- Magazine Collages
- Family Yoga Session (use free YouTube videos)
- Living-Room Dance Party
- Free Virtual Museum Tours (Smithsonian, Louvre, etc.)
- Library Storytime & Crafts
- Write Letters to Relatives
- Create a Family Newspaper
- Home Talent Show
- Karaoke with YouTube Instrumentals
- DIY Photo Booth (use a sheet & props)
- Friendship Bracelet Making
- Plant Seeds in Recycled Containers
- Flower Pressing
- Comic-Strip Creation
- DIY Hopscotch (sidewalk chalk)
- Indoor Treasure Hunt
- LEGO Building Challenge
- Board Games & Card Games Marathon
- Rearrange Your Room (kid's choice theme)
- Blanket Fort Building
- Kitchen Science Experiments (baking-soda volcano, etc.)
- Sidewalk Storm-Drain Art (chalk)
- Recreate Favorite Movie Scenes
- Make a Time Capsule
- Learn a Language (Duolingo, etc.)
- Podcast Listening & Discussion
- Handmade Greeting Cards
- Virtual Homework Help (library programs)
- Pen-Pal Project (via school or 4-H)
- Basic Coding (Scratch, Code.org)
- Stop-Motion Animation (phone + toys)
- Movie Night & Popcorn Bar
- Backyard Picnic
- Seed-Planting 'Garden' (windowsill pots)

- Nature Collage Art
- Flashlight Tag (at dusk)
- Simon Says / Freeze Dance
- Give-Away Lemonade Stand (charity fun)
- Neighborhood Mapping
- DIY Treasure Map & Hunt
- Build a DIY Sundial (stick + paper)
- Design a Board Game
- Learn Magic Tricks (online tutorials)
- Create a Mini Podcast (free apps)
- Virtual Field Trip Research
- Book-Character Fashion Show
- Decorate T-Shirts with Fabric Markers
- Make & Fly Paper Kites
- Shadow Puppets with a Flashlight
- Alphabet Sidewalk Scavenger Hunt
- Color-Mixing with Water & Food Coloring
- Ice-Cube Fruit Infusions (cool treats)
- Nature Journal (draw/plaster casts)
- Finger Knitting
- Bean-Bag Balance Race
- Indoor Bowling (plastic bottles + ball)
- Memory Game (household items on tray)
- DIY Bookmarks & Exchange
- Oral History Interview (talk with grandparents)
- Create a Family Tree
- Recycled Wind Chimes
- Self-Portrait Drawing
- Calligraphy Practice (online guides)
- Vision Board Crafting
- Jigsaw Puzzle Relay
- Item-Match Memory Game
- Scavenger Hunt—Colors of the Rainbow
- Choreograph & Teach a Family Dance
- Family Stretching Routine

- Learn Basic Sign Language (free videos)
- Design Your Own Superhero (draw + back-story)
- Write & Illustrate a Short Story
- Juggling with Scarves
- “Weather Report” Role-Play
- Paper Helicopter Construction
- Color-Matching Scavenger Hunt
- Explore Google Earth (geography lesson)
- Shadow Art on Paper (sunny day)
- Guided Mindfulness Breaks (YouTube)
- Write & Perform a Poem
- Family Talent Night Showcase