

MOMTM MAGAZINE

REAL | LOCAL | MOMS

Lane County | February/March 2016 | FREE



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JENNIFER SHEFFLER

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BIRTHDAY PARTY



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Photos by MJ's Photography

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meet the MOM^{MAGAZINE} experts

[They know what they're talking about]



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"Being a mother is learning about strengths you didn't know you had, and dealing with fears you didn't know existed."

~ Linda Wooten

Published by GO Creative, LLC

263 29th Avenue SW
Albany, OR 97322

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Because I said so!

Spark joy

I haven't actually read the top-selling de-cluttering manual *The life-changing magic of tidying up*, by Marie Kondo, but I like what I've heard—particularly Kondo's principle for determining whether or not to keep a particular item. She encourages readers to ask themselves if the item "sparks joy." I love this advice, not just for sorting things, but for life in general. Of course, there are required tasks like grocery shopping, bill paying and more that must be done regardless of their joyfulness but, overall, I've been trying to use the question "does this bring me joy?" as a filter for how I choose to spend my time, who I spend it with and where.

It's not breaking news that moms have incredibly limited spare time, so it's even more critical that the time we have is used in a way that brings us joy. For me that often means clearing time to be with my family in an active way like going for a walk, playing games together or having an impromptu dance party. It also means occasionally making time for myself to exercise, read, spend time with friends or just be alone.

Don't get me wrong; this is an epic challenge. Clearly I am imperfect in my efforts or I would have already made time to read Kondo's book! It's painful to pry myself away from my growing to-do list and desire to be the perfect volunteer, professional, do-gooder and just general busy-body. But when I can ignore the dust balls collecting in the corner and the laundry piled up in the family room and redirect myself to what's important, I spark more joy.

So, the next time you find yourself doing something out of a sense of obligation or because it's what others think you should do, stop and ask yourself: "Does this spark joy?"

Why? Because I said so!



Angela and her family on a hike in the Scottish Highlands, something that brings her joy.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Angela".

Angela Hibbard
MOM Magazine Editor-in-Chief



All inclusive beach vacations

Of all the vacations you can take with your family, nothing is quite like an all-inclusive beach vacation.

As a mom, you want everyone to have fun as they spend quality family-time together but you have concerns about safety and staying within your budget. The right all-inclusive resort can fulfill all your needs and alleviate your concerns. There are huge differences in quality at all-inclusive resorts, even though the photos on the websites look similar.

Club Med Cancun

I was very happy to recently vacation with my family at the Club Med "Village" in Cancun, Mexico. Club Med was the innovator of the all-inclusive concept and now has over 60 "Villages" in locations around the world, including ski mountains and exotic beaches. Club Med claimed the best location in Cancun over 40 years ago and it is spread out over 22 acres. Only registered guests are allowed on the grounds and it is very secure. They have three distinct beach areas: a huge powder-white sand beach, a snorkeling beach with a coral reef and a watersports beach. A large lagoon in the middle of the resort is used for waterskiing and wakeboarding. Club Med is a French company and, as a result, have amazing French Chefs and many European guests giving it an international atmosphere.

If you have an active family—this is the place for you. We played tennis, learned how to windsurf, went sailing, paddled kayaks, learned new dances, played beach volleyball and soccer, attended evening shows, relaxed in hammocks and braved the "Flying Trapeze." Of course, you are also welcome to lounge on a sunbed while the "beach boys" bring you tropical beverages. This was one of our all-time favorite vacations and we kept talking about "next

time" and "when we come back." There is no pressure to purchase extras and tipping is not expected, so there is no need to carry money. The Club Med locations in Ixtapa and Cancun; Mexico; Sandpiper Bay, Florida and Punta Cana; Dominican Republic are all great choices for families. Their motto is "Where Happiness means the world" and making guests happy is the goal of their staff, called "G.O.'s" (Gracious Organizers). The G.O.'s are the key to the Club Med experience. They are hand-picked from around the world and must possess many skills including a warm, friendly and fun-loving attitude which is contagious.

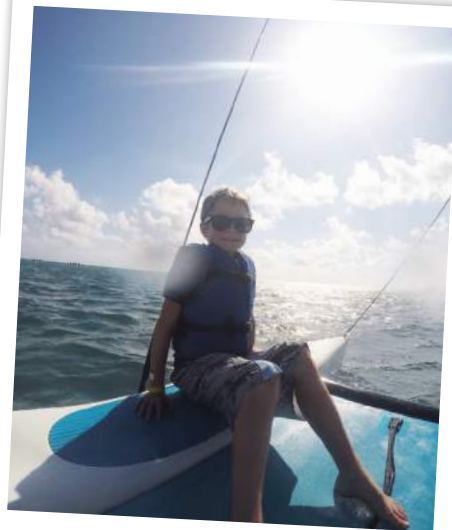
You can fly to Cancun from Eugene Airport on United Airlines, Alaska Airlines, American Airlines and Delta Airlines. Contact a Club Med Certified Travel Expert to plan your perfect vacation.

Vacation MOM is brought to you in partnership with Eugene Airport. See ad on page 4.



Meet Vacation MOM™

Donnita Bassinger is mom to three children and lives in Eugene with her husband. She is active in Scouting, school PTO's and local charities. Donnita has been a travel agent for 30 years and is the owner of VIP Vacations, Inc. She is a Club Med Certified Travel Expert and would be happy to help you plan your vacation at 541-688-7473. You can find more information on Facebook under "Vacation MOM Page".



What to consider when planning an all-inclusive family vacation

Costs

Some resorts start with a lower price and then try and upsell you with lots of extras and surcharges. Tipping is expected at some resorts and not allowed at others.

Activities

Make sure there is something for all ages and interests in your family.

Location

Do you want to leave to visit other sights? If so, how easy is it to get to them?

Clientele

Who do you want to spend your vacation with?

Food

How important are meals and beverages to you? Some feature gourmet restaurants while others are mostly buffets.

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Practice safe snow driving

Car trouble is never fun, especially if your car is full of kids. So play it safe this winter by following these tips for safe driving in winter conditions.

Practice

During the daylight, rehearse maneuvers slowly on ice or snow in an empty lot.

Take it slow

Drive slowly, including accelerating, decelerating and turning.

Know your breaks

Don't stop if you can avoid it, but when you do, make sure to increase your stopping distances. For best results, stomp on anti lock brakes and pump on non-anti lock brakes.

Especially don't stop going up a hill. Get some inertia on a flat road before you take on a hill and don't power up a hill. Applying extra gas will start your wheels spinning.

Maintain your car

Check the battery, tire tread and windshield wipers. Keep your windows clear, put no-freeze fluid in the washer reservoir and check your antifreeze.

Have key items on hand

Keep a flashlight, jumper cables, abrasive material (sand, kitty litter, even floor mats), shovel, snow brush and ice scraper, warning devices (like flares) and blankets. For long trips, add food and water, medication and cell phone.

Stopped or stalled?

Stay in your car, put bright markers on antenna or windows and shine dome light. If you run your car, clear exhaust pipe and run it just enough to stay warm.

Plan your route

Allow plenty of time. Check the forecast

and adjust your departure to avoid serious weather, if possible. Be familiar with the directions and let others know your route and arrival time.

Finally, and most importantly, if you don't have to go out in bad weather, stay home and enjoy the view from inside.

Sources: OSHA and AAA

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Amy Newport lives in Eugene, OR with her husband and four boys. She is the Community Outreach Specialist for Kendall of Eugene.



Expert tip

We love this advice from a truck driver's training school:

Watch the tire spray. If there's a lot of spray coming off others' tires, the roads are wet. If there's not as much spray but the roads look wet, take caution because they're beginning to freeze. And if the roads look wet but you don't see much spray, you're on ice, so be careful.

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Jennifer Sheffler

Gets real!

This creative mom shares her passion for her family, crafting and throwing over-the-top birthday parties.

Family comes first.

Tell us about your family.

My husband and I were introduced 15 years ago, and fell in love the moment we met. We have three wonderful children: Gage, 12; Gabrielle, 10 and Jayden, 9. Jayden is not our biological child, but has been with us since he was just over a year old. He is very special to our family and we look forward to our future with him creating lifelong memories. We have a very old Chihuahua named Ziggy, two cats named Cash and Princess and two very spoiled guinea pigs named Nemo and Pippin.

Tell us about one of your proudest mom moments?

One day I was approached at my son's school by a teacher that just wanted to tell me how sweet my child was and explain to me that he had taken one of their special needs students "under his wing" and made sure he got to sit with him and his friends at lunch and play soccer with all the boys at recess. Gage loved getting to work one on one with this child as well. He has so much compassion and love inside of him.

Now tell us about one of your most humbling mom moments?

I would honestly have to say, being asked to be Cover MOM. This is one of the greatest experiences and I am honored to share my story and tips.

Describe that moment when you want to stop time and freeze your kids just the way they are.

When we are playing games as a family or out and about and all you see are smiles on their faces and hear nothing but laughter and happiness. Or when we are in Disneyland, because who doesn't want to just live with Mickey forever?

If you could outsource just one household responsibility, what would it be?

Laundry! With a household of five and working full time, that mountain of clothing and towels never goes away!

Tell us about one of the funniest things one of your kids has said that you threaten to retell on their prom or wedding night.

We have a long running tradition in our home that on the morning of every birthday they wake up to a fully decorated hallway filled with balloons and to the New Kids on The Block rendition of *Happy Birthday* playing on the stereo. My kids look forward to it each year, and I always tell them that one day I am going to pay to have their high school play it over the loudspeaker on their birthdays when they are older. As of right now, they aren't taking me serious on this one.

Mom always said...

You hear your mother's voice when you say to your kids "..."

"Don't knock it til' you try it." Growing up we were always told to try foods at least once. If we did not like it, that was ok, but we were not allowed to have an opinion until the food actually entered our mouths. In our home we now call these thank you bites. More often than not, our picky daughter will end up loving the food that she originally curled her nose up at.

Your biggest wish for your kids is...

That no matter what path they choose to take in life we will be supportive. We just want them to be happy, do something they love and do it with a strong passion, to follow their dreams

No one works harder than mom.

We know that being a mom is a full time job. Tell us about your work or volunteerism outside of the home.

I am a licensed contractor and work full time during the day as a Contract Administrator for one of Oregon's largest concrete contractors. At night I work on my DIY Blog and host a monthly DIY/Craft Club for women from all over Lane County.

I volunteer for my children's school, and have been the chairperson of the school's silent auction for three years now. I am also a member of the Development Committee for a local non profit, Direction Service, Inc., assisting with fundraising and event planning.

How do you manage it all, and what usually falls through the cracks?

I have a very organized home system that helps keep the kids in line with their school work and sports activities. I do a lot of meal planning in the kitchen, I use my Erin Condren Life Planner daily, lay out outfits the night before for the following day and I LOVE lists! I stay up late in order to catch any TV shows I like on the DVR or read a book. I would say that date nights fall through the cracks. We spend most of our time DIY'ing together (which we both love) but never set time aside to go have a quiet meal together.

Continued on page 15



interview by Angela Hibbard
photos by MJ's Photography

Who is MOM?

Community/hometown: Eugene, OR

Family: Husband, Allen Sheffler, purchasing agent and children: Gage, age 12; Gabrielle, age 10 and Jayden, age 9.

Profession: Contract Administrator, blogger at www.OneThriftyChick.com and owner of The CRAFT House, a DIY workshops for women.

MOM's favorite

Tell us about your favorite...

...pastimes: Junking, crafting and DIY'ing

...words to live by: "She believed she could, so she did."

...place to hide and find some

peace and quiet: When you find that place, let me know!

...discipline tactic that keeps everyone in line:

Early bedtime! Gets them every time!

...way to get out of making dinner:

Take the kids to "visit" Mema and Papa. Mema always makes great meals.

...book you've read recently that you would recommend

to others: *The Language of Flowers*, by Vanessa Diffenbaugh





Check out some
of Cover MOM,
Jennifer Sheffler's
birthday party ideas
on pages 22
and 24



Continued from page 10

*If mom's not happy,
nobody's happy.*

What's the one word that best describes you?

Creative.

Name one thing that is part of your daily routine that you just can't live without.

Kissing my kids goodbye as they head off to school. I never let them go without telling them I love them and to have a great day.

Tell us something about you that would surprise your kids (or your husband).

I want to adopt another child! I don't know when or how, I just feel in my heart that we should have a fourth child.

What keeps you sane?

Blogging, crafting and caffeine. I love my job, I love my family, but those three things bring me back down to earth when things get too crazy.

What is the best way that you let off steam?

Exercise. I had a personal trainer for just under a year and was able to lose 40 pounds. I enjoyed my time at the gym and always felt re-charged after a stressful day.

What's your guilty pleasure?

Starbucks. And throwing over-the-top birthday parties. I love themes and tend to get a little carried away.

You're known for your elaborate and creative birthday bashes. Where do you get your inspiration and what advice would you give other moms when preparing for a party?

I always start with the child when it comes to a birthday party. My kids and I sit down each year and brainstorm fun party ideas, and we design the event around the theme they choose. I love to read blogs and gather a lot of inspiration from there, along with magazines and Pinterest. I love to scour thrift stores and always hit up the party sections, you'd be surprised what great things you can find for a fraction of what



you would pay at a big box store. I throw elaborate parties because I love every aspect of the designing, planning and hosting. My advice to other moms is to start small, see if party planning is something you find enjoyable. If not, stick to simple parties that are just as fun.

If you could invite three people to dinner (living or dead) who would they be? Why?

Michael Maloney (ABC's *Extreme Makeover Home Edition*) because I have always loved his style and his personality, I need to be his friend. Channing Tatum, do I really need to say why? He's just dreamy. Oprah Winfrey, she is such an inspiration and I would love to sit down and listen to her share about where she started and what she did in order to follow her dreams in life.

Who inspires you?

Moms all over. I strive every day to be the best mom I can be and sometimes, when it gets tough, I look to other moms for inspiration. Whether it's on blogs, Facebook, or in real life, I pay attention to how other moms make it all work.

Listen to mom

What surprised you the most about motherhood?

The amount of love a mother could develop with each child. Whether they are a birth, foster or adopted child, a mother's love is unconditional. And Mother Bear is real!

What have you learned from your mom or other mother figures?

My mom always told me to leave the mess and spend time with the kids, that the housework will always be there. That was hard to do at first, but as my children get older, I realize that spending an hour on the floor building Legos or playing a game will create memories where folding laundry only creates a clean laundry room.

What message would you like to share with other moms? Remember to tell it like it is.

Don't compare yourself to other moms. I have a wonderful blog where I post amazing pictures of finished projects which portrays a life of organized perfection. The truth is that, behind the camera, is a mom that is run ragged and has a sink full of dirty dishes daily. There is not a day (ok maybe before an event) that you could stop by my house and see it spotless and pristine. We all face our own battles and it is so easy to get down on yourself when you see someone else's life that looks perfect on the outside. Be kind to one another as you never know what they may be going through in their own journeys. Encourage your children to be kind to all kids and to stand up for something that is not ok. Life does not have to be perfect, just be yourselves and have fun!

"Don't compare yourself to other moms. I have a wonderful blog where I post amazing pictures of finished projects which portrays a life of organized perfection. The truth is that, behind the camera, is a mom that is run ragged and has a sink full of dirty dishes daily."

~ Cover MOM
Jennifer Sheffler







A good party host always has some games up her sleeve to keep kids entertained. Here are some classics that are sure to be crowd-pleasers. So get your game on and give them a try.

Pin the “blank” on just about anything

“Pin the tail on the donkey” can be adapted to suit any party theme. Think pin the cloud on the rainbow; pin the ice cream on the cone; pin the horn on the unicorn; pin the smokestack on the train. You get the idea.

Limbo

All you need is a broom handle and some music to see how low your party guests can go. If it’s an outdoor summer party, you can swap the broom handle for the stream of a hose.

Pass the parcel

Collect a variety of small prizes, enough for one per guest. Wrap the first prize in paper then lay that parcel on another sheet of wrapping paper (preferably a different color or design) along with the next prize. Wrap that prize and continue layering the prizes in wrapping paper until all the prizes are wrapped and you have one large, funny looking parcel. Then, ala musical chairs, pass the parcel

to music. When the music stops, the child holding the parcel unwraps the first layer and wins that prize. He then removes himself from the circle and the game/music continues until every child has unwrapped a layer and prize.

Scavenger hunt

Give kids a list of party-themed items you’ve hidden. Have them work in teams to find them all.

Freeze dance

Kids of all ages love to dance and the added fun of freezing when the music stops makes it even better. This classic is great for burning up energy if you have an active crowd.

Balloon ping-pong

Make simple paddles with paper plates and paint sticks. You can even have the kids decorate their own paddle. Break into teams of two and rally the balloon back and forth keeping it off the floor. You can also keep it simple and just use your hands as paddles.

Remember to be flexible. If the kids are enjoying a game, let them linger a little longer even if it means you won’t get through all of your activities by the end of the party. Equally, if you’re not feeling the love for a certain game just move on. The important thing is that the kids have fun and everyone gets their game on.

[Momism #18: Look but don't touch.]

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Birthday Party IDEAS

Need a little inspiration for
your child's next birthday
bash? These fun party themes
by creative MOM readers
have you covered.

Puppy Party

If you have a dog lover in the family, celebrate their birthday with a Puppy Party. MOM reader Lindsay Stone created the perfect puppy birthday bash complete with doggy treats, adoptable puppy party favors and more. Puppy love at its best.



Cover MOM and author of the popular blog, One Thrifty Chick, Jennifer Sheffler shares a couple of her favorite birthday party themes. For more birthday party inspiration check out her blog at www.onethriftychick.blogspot.com

CAKE BOSS

Young bakers were inspired with this Cake Boss themed birthday party.

Each girl was welcomed with a personalized apron on her chair, a baker's hat on her mat, a DIY rolling pin (closet rod), a small bowl of water for attaching fondant and the perfect mason jar for a cold beverage.

Previously prepared cakes were waiting for the guests on the table along with decorating supplies.

Once the decorating was complete, each cake was boxed up in a pink cake box with a customized tag.



Momism #9: When you have your own house you can make the rules.

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ART PARTY

The creative juices flowed at this art party where guests colored, painted and created to their heart's content.

Rice Krispie paint brush treats and crayon cupcakes were some of the art-inspired treats at the party.



Stations were set up with various art supplies: paint, play doh, clay, stickers and more.

Guests took their works of art home along with art supplies as a party favor.



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children's clubs

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Club Med



Warm up with

Almost any experience can be improved with the addition of chocolate and coffee, and chili is no exception. That's why we love these chili recipes with a kick. Make them for a party or a cozy family lunch; everyone will be asking for more.

Four bean turkey chili with chocolate

Ingredients

- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 large green bell pepper, chopped
- 1 large jalapeno, seeded and chopped
- 4 large garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 cup white wine
- 1 pound ground turkey
- 1 ½ teaspoons beef broth concentrate (I recommend "Better than Bouillon")
- 1 tablespoon cumin
- 2 tablespoons chili powder
- 1 32-ounce can crushed tomatoes
- 1 15-ounce can black beans, lightly drained
- 1 15-ounce can light red kidney beans, lightly drained
- 1 15-ounce can dark red kidney beans, lightly drained
- 1 15-ounce can refried beans
- 1 ounce dark chocolate
- ½ cup sour cream, for garnish
- ⅓ cup sharp cheddar cheese, for garnish

Directions

In a stock pot add onions, jalapenos, and bell pepper. Add the olive oil and sauté for a

CHILI

few minutes. Add the wine, and cover. Cook about 10 minutes, or until the bell peppers are nearly cooked through.

Add the ground turkey, and break up the turkey with your spatula. Cook until browned.

Add concentrated beef broth (do not dilute), tomatoes, black beans, light red kidney beans, and dark red kidney beans. Stir well. Add chili powder, cumin, and chocolate. Mash refried beans well to break up any solid chunks before adding to the pot. The refried beans will help thicken chili.

Simmer for 30 minutes, and stir every 5 minutes. Be sure to scrape the bottom of the pan each time. Garnish with sour cream and cheddar cheese.

Recipe courtesy of MOM reader and professional chef, Becky McConnell. For more of Chef Becky's favorite recipes check out www.chefbecky.com

Red pork, beef and bean chili with coffee

Ingredients

- ½ pound sliced bacon
- 2 pounds boneless shoulder cut into 1 – inch cubes
- 2 pounds chuck steak
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 to 2 fresh jalapeño chilis, seeded and chopped
- 4 large garlic cloves, minced
- 2 teaspoons dried oregano, crumbled
- ⅓ cup chili powder
- 1 tablespoon ground cumin

¼ teaspoon cayenne

14 ½ ounce can beef broth

1 cup brewed coffee

1 cup water

28 to 32 ounce can crushed tomatoes with purée

2 (19 ounce) cans small red beans or kidney beans, rinsed and drained

Garnish: chopped red onion, torn cilantro, diced avocado, sour cream, warm tortillas and chips.

Directions

Cook bacon in 6 to 8 quart heavy pot over moderate heat, turning until crisp. Transfer with tongs to paper towels to drain and pour off all but 2 tablespoons fat from pot. Crumble bacon. Pat pork and beef dry and season with salt and pepper. Add oil to pot and heat over moderately high heat until hot but not smoking. Brown pork and beef in about six batches without crowding and transfer with a slotted spoon to a plate. Add onion and jalapeños cook over moderate heat, stirring until softened. Add garlic, oregano, chili powder, cumin and cayenne, then cook, stirring for 1 minute. Return pork and beef to pot with any juices accumulated on plate and add broth, coffee, water and tomatoes with purée.

Simmer, uncovered, stirring occasionally, until pork and beef are tender, about 2 hours. Stir in beans and bring to a simmer, stirring. Serve with bacon and garnishes.

Note: If serving for a group, prepare this recipe up to two days in advance and chill in the refrigerator. Then you can relax when your guests arrive, and simply reheat chili before serving.

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Not another toy!

Birthday party gift ideas

The active kids' birthday party circuit can make gift-giving and receiving a little overwhelming. Who really needs more toys? So here's a guide to some simple, non-toy birthday gift ideas.



Subscriptions

Purchase a subscription to a kids' magazine like *National Geographic Kids*, *Disney Junior Magazine* or *Highlights*.



Gift certificates

Kids love the idea of having their own "money." A gift card to the movies, ice cream shop or a favorite restaurant is always a hit.



Cookies

Print out and decorate your child's favorite cookie recipe and provide all the ingredients needed to make it.



This coupon is good for
one outing of your
choice with Sarah!



Coupons

Make a coupon for a play date for your child and the birthday boy or girl. Consider including a special outing like mini-golf or bowling.



Flower pot

Decorate a terra-cotta pot and include a packet of seeds to plant. Or don't decorate the pot and include paints and a brush for the birthday child to decorate.



Picture frame

Purchase a colorful frame, or have your child decorate a simple one. Include a photo of your child and the birthday boy or girl.

Parents of 3-7 year olds



Do you struggle with your child's Disobedience? Hitting? Fighting? Tantrums?

Help is at hand!

Take part in the Success for Children & Families Project and learn how:

- ◆ To improve your child's behavior
- ◆ To increase your confidence in parenting

FREE of charge and up to \$90 in gift cards/cash

Call today to see if you qualify for this exciting and important research project!

Call Today!

Success for
Children &
Families Project
Oregon Research
Institute

541-434-1551

success@ori.org

www.ori.org/success



Snow much fun!

Move over snowmen and snow angels, we've got snowy games your kids will love.

Snowball toss: Create a stockpile of snowballs then try to toss them into a circle target drawn in the snow. For younger children one circle is enough; but for older children, create several concentric circles and challenge them to get their snowball in the bullseye.

Snow batting practice: Find a large stick for a bat, or use a real one if you have it, and start tossing some snowballs.

Frozen Twister: Make a twister board in the snow using water colored with food coloring.

Snow paint: With the snow as your canvas, paint your masterpiece with colored water.

Tic-Tac-Snow: Use a stick to carve out a tic-tac-toe grid, then use pine cones, sticks, rocks or just about anything as playing pieces.



[Momism #40: I'm only going to say this once.]

MOM magazine



Know a SuperDAD?

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Send your SuperDAD nominations to editor@mommag.com



Neighbors helping neighbors with cancer.

Oregon Cancer Foundation helps cancer patients in Lane County with crisis financial support:

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could pay for a patient's rent or utilities

\$250

could pay to repair a patient's car and get them to treatment

\$100

could provide an overnight stay to a patient living in rural Lane County

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MOM² MAGAZINE

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