



# Afterschool Activities: 5 Ways to Learn Outside the Classroom

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As adults, we never stop learning. In fact, the best thing about learning is that we're continuing to grow our skills and knowledge throughout our lifetime, whether we're learning about parenting, learning new hobbies, or coming to new realizations about the world around us. Likewise, for kids, learning doesn't only take place in the classroom. Our kids' minds are like sponges sucking up every bit of information presented to them.

This is why research time and time again continues to support the idea that extracurricular activities and experiences outside of the school day impact our kids in a very positive way. If you're looking for new ways to stimulate your little learner, look no further. Here's a few intriguing ways to keep your little one busy after the school bell rings:

## Amateur photography



Kids have a huge imagination, and a comparably huge appreciation for the things that we as adults take for granted. Help your child see the beauty in the world around them, and teach them an appreciation for photography. Ask them to identify the things in nature or around them that they think are beautiful or interesting.

Help them to take creative and meaningful photographs of their favorite things and create a collage together. Not only will your child develop an ongoing love for beauty in nature or ordinary objects, they will also practice categorization and classification skills by making collages of similarly grouped items.

## Edible crafts



What could be more fun than finger-painting with paint they can eat? How would your child like to make cookies that look like masterpieces, or Christmas ornaments they can eat? There's no shortage of edible craft ideas on the web to keep your child busy and excited for virtually any holiday, or on any ordinary day!

Creating edible crafts will not only stimulate your child's creativity, but even for the youngest of learners, edible crafts can be a [sensory adventure for kids](#) while they explore different textures, colors, tastes, and more!

## DIY musical instruments



Using ordinary craft items found at your local craft store, your child can make music using his or her own DIY musical instrument? Popsicle sticks, uncooked rice, old jugs, jars, or bottles can come together a wide range of musical instruments your child will love to play.

Make water xylophones, simple drums, rain sticks, castanets, tambourines, and many more instruments to ignite a passion for music and work your child's creativity and imagination.

Yoga... for kids!



Yoga is a great way for kids to work on large motor skills while moving and focusing their bodies on fun poses they'll love to recreate with you. Better yet, use yoga as an opportunity to teach your child the importance of calming themselves to focus on the moment, their breathing, and their bodies.

Yoga is great for stretching and learning to move their bodies, but also amazing for their minds. Did your child have a busy or stressful day at school? Teach them that yoga can help them with that.

## Free learning play time



Don't forget to occasionally let your kids set the tone for what they want to do. By offering kids choices, they learn how to exercise their free will within acceptable limits. This helps them to build confidence in their freedom and expression. Offer kids options for what they can do in their free learning play. On rainy days if all they want to do is complete handwriting worksheets and move on to playing their favorite video game, then allow it within your parent-given limits.

If your child wants to [practice math skills](#) on their favorite iPad app that they learned while completing math worksheets, let them play the app. If your child wants to play outside, let them play, but place the condition that they must learn something or practice a skill while they are playing. Challenge them to find learning experiences outside, such as discussing the types of clouds, or observing the weather.

## The Takeaway

The best part about afterschool activities is the fact that kids don't always realize that they're learning because they're having so much fun! After a hard day working at school, they can come home and do something truly fun, while still learning and practicing meaningful skills.

By integrating some of the above ideas, your child will not only work their academic brains, but also their creativity and imagination while they build a lifelong love for learning!

