



# HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF... 4TH OF JULY

Fireworks. Picnics. Parades. Red, White, and Blue. How does your family like to celebrate Independence Day (also known by its place on the calendar—the 4th of July)! While there may be things going on in your community, how does your family celebrate this most American of holidays? Not sure? Here are some ideas that don't require a lot of money or planning, and can easily be adapted to fit your family:

## PRESCHOOL & ELEMENTARY

- Break out some red, white, and blue Play-Doh or modeling clay (*either can be purchased at most dollar stores*) and create your own American flags. When your design is perfected, bake them in the oven until they're hard so you can display them all month long.
- Grab some liquid starch, clear school glue, and star confetti. Pour the glue into a large bowl. Little by little, add in the liquid starch and stir until you have a slime-like consistency. Then, add in the stars for your star spangled slime. *BONUS: Put any excess slime into individual baggies and deliver them to neighbors to share in the gooey goodness.*
- Put red, white, and blue glow sticks in their own individual water bottles. Turn the lights down low and hide them throughout the house. Challenge your family members to see who can find the most bottles.
- Make tie-dye t-shirts in a mop bucket outside. Buy or find light-colored shirts, tie off sections with rubber bands, and use dyed water to design your own creations. Using a Sharpie®, record the calendar year on the sleeve. Repeat the tradition year after year and compare works of art!
- Instead of battling the crowds to watch fireworks, you may opt to bring your laptop or tablet outside and watch cool fireworks shows online on a blanket in your yard. (*Or skip the heat altogether, build a fort inside, and watch.*)

## MIDDLE SCHOOL & HIGH SCHOOL

- Invite over a few neighbors and friends and have a 4th of July Field Day featuring the following events:
  - » Ring the American flag with a red, white, or blue circular glow sticks
  - » Water balloon toss with red, white, and blue balloons
  - » Capture the (American) flag
  - » Loyalists versus Federalist tug of war
- Go to your local discount store and pick up a bunch of patriotic glasses, hats, and stickers and set up a photo booth. Red, white, and blue streamers are inexpensive and easy to hang as a backdrop. Snap your kids' pictures, challenging them to see who can come up with the most "patriotic photo." Make sure you get a group photo by setting the timer on your camera!
- Do a progressive dinner with a patriotic twist. Your first stop of appetizers, everyone has to order something red. The next stop, the entrée, everyone has to eat something white. And for your final stop, dessert, everyone must finish off something blue!
- Grab a bunch of sparklers and wait until it's almost dark. Take turns spelling out words with the sparklers. Make a game out of it by guessing each other's words or pictures. You can also buy a slow shutter speed app (*around \$1*) and use it to document the sparkler fun like a professional.

Whatever you decide to do, do it together. Nothing matters more than creating new memories with your people—even if nothing goes as planned!