

# Pointers For Parents

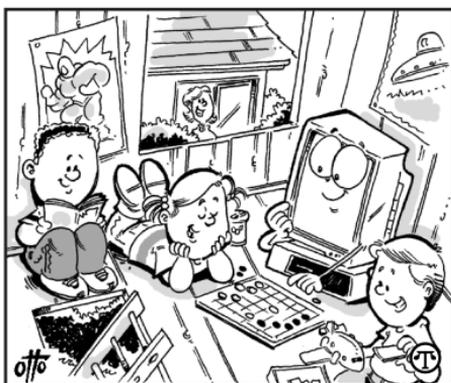
## Finding Fun Ways To Spend Time With Kids

(NAPSA)—Sometimes keeping kids entertained hardly seems like child's play, but there are ways to make it easier. Instead of spending more time in front of the TV, try these fun ideas for spending time with your children.

- **Have a Dinner Party**—Help your child plan a dinner party for his or her friends (real or imaginary). Work together to create a menu from which guests can order (it can be as simple as pizza with or without mushrooms and a choice of chocolate milk or fruit juice). Let your child decide what music to play for the evening. You can even send out invitations that your child makes and ask guests to dress in line with your chosen theme (beach party, formal evening, etc.).

- **Surf The Web Together**—There are many kid-friendly sites available that can make surfing the Web with your children a fun and educational experience. For instance, KOL—America Online's service for kids—lets children "build" a virtual clubhouse where kids can "hang out" with their friends. Kids can use the clubhouse to share photos, post polls, and exchange messages. Plus they can express their creativity by decorating their clubhouses with personalized themes and even create their own animated online personas. Parents approve all visitors to the clubhouse, and they can block their children from visiting clubhouses of which they disapprove.

- **Start a Collection**—Work with your child to start a new collection, whether its rocks, stamps, baseball cards—anything that



**Parents can help children build their own online clubhouse to "hang out" with their friends.**

appeals to his or her interests. Encourage your child to sort his or her collections into categories of sizes, colors, similarities, etc.—and to learn as much as possible about the subject. If, for example, your child collects dinosaurs, go online to find a fun dinosaur Web site. If your child's hobby is collecting planes, arrange a trip to the airport or visit an aviation museum. If your child collects postcards, visit antique shops to add to his collection.

- **Road Trip**—Take your kids on a road trip through an area they've never been before. Go online before you leave home and find a specific destination you want to reach. Then, let your kids take turns reading a map and helping you navigate your way there. Pick up some sort of souvenir from your trip (it can be anything from a T-shirt to a paper menu from a restaurant) and start a Road Trip Memory Box at home. Add to it with each trip you take.

To sign up for AOL's KOL Service for kids, visit [www.aol.com](http://www.aol.com).