

Fun with

Indie Rock Mom



I admit it—I'm a bit of a celebrity junkie. And when it comes to the lifestyles of the rich and famous, nothing intrigues me more than the wild names celebrities give their babies. So for this article, I thought I'd do something a little different. We're going to play a little game:

Match the Baby with its Mommy



Baby

Egypt
Mars Merkaba
Bronx Mowgli
Apple
Zuma Nesta Rock
Sparrow Midnight
Angel Iris
Ever Gabo

Mommy

Gwen Stefani
Gwyneth Paltrow
Milla Jovovich
Nicole Richie
Alicia Keyes
Mel B
Erykah Badu
Ashlee Simpson

Good Luck!
Indie Rock Mom

Answers: Egypt/Alicia Keyes, Mars Merkaba/Erykah Badu, Bronx Mowgli/Ashlee Simpson, Apple/Gwyneth Paltrow, Zuma Nesta Rock/Gwen Stefani, Sparrow Midnight/Nicole Richie, Angel Iris/Mel B, Ever Gabo/Milla Jovovich

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family money

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An Old-School Guide to Saving Money

Throughout history, families with children have always taken the brunt of every economic crisis. Here are a few classic tips to help stretch the family dollar:

By Nancy Fulton

Buy used.

Now's the perfect time to learn the joy of second-hand shopping. Even the most fashion-savvy parent will be pleasantly surprised at the quality and selection available at today's thrift stores.

Ditch cable.

You could save \$50 to \$100 a month. Check out hulu.com where you can watch your favorite TV shows online. Or sign up for Netflix Instant for access to more than 20,000 titles.

Get out and socialize.

Our grandparents invented potlucks, dances and barn raisings because they were bored to death. You too can have a social life for pennies if you find other parents with kids who have nothing to do. Meet at a kid-friendly (and free) location and have good, old-fashioned fun.

Save.

Generations of parents have saved food from day to day to serve as leftovers. They kept boxes of clothes for kids to paw through as they moved from age to age. Some even collected string and rubber bands. You don't have to turn into a hoarder to save, but now's a great chance to trim costs where you can.

*50

[words or less]

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MONOPOLY REMIXED

By Sarah Borroum

When it comes to teaching kids and teens about money, nothing beats a game of Monopoly. And the best way to keep things interesting? Try these variations on the official rules.

Get Paid to Park.

Officially, the "Free Parking" square on the Monopoly® board doesn't count for anything. Up the ante by taking \$1,000 from the bank and putting it on the square before the game begins. Anytime a player lands on this square, they can claim the money and the bank replenishes the supply.

The ChooChoo Train.

Whenever a player lands on a railroad, they may choose to move his or her token to any other railroad square.

Brother Can You Spare a Dime?

Add personal loans to the game. If someone needs money, another player may provide a loan at any agreed upon rate or fee.

No One-Dollar Bills.

The one downside of Monopoly is the time it can take to finish the game. To speed things up a bit, don't use one-dollar bills. Counting and making change only slows the game down. Instead, round up or down for every bill.

These are just a few ideas. See if your family can come up with new ideas and create a highly-customized, extremely-fun version of this ever-popular board game.

PARTY LIKE A ROCK STAR

DIY rock star birthday parties

By James Flores

Have your kids graduated from Dora and Diego themed parties? Had your fill of princess and superhero decorations? It's time to rock the house. A rock star inspired birthday bash is a cheap (and cool) alternative to the typical party. Here are a few ideas:

The Invite.

Make your own laminated V.I.P. All Access Passes for the invite. Include a plastic badge holder and lanyard so guests can wear their passes to the party.

V.I.P. Entrance.

On the day of the event, place gold stars all along the walkway to your front door and mount a sign that reads: "V.I.P. Entrance." This is where your guests can flash their passes to get in.

Props Station.

Once they're inside, little rockers can accessorize with glow bracelets, sunglasses and other crazy add-ons.

Tattoo Shop.

Seriously, what's a rock star party without tattoos? Purchase rock-themed temporary tattoos for your guests, and make sure you have plenty ... moms and dads will most likely want to get tatted as well.

The Main Stage.

Here's where the real rockin' happens! Have Guitar Hero or Rock Band set up with kid-friendly tunes.

The Side Stage.

For guests not on the main stage, have a second area with inflatable instruments for an air guitar contest. Winners can keep the instruments.

BONUS IDEA:

Don't forget to wear a t-shirt with the word "MANAGER" printed on front. You can also have a few adults wear yellow "SECURITY" t-shirts to add a little authenticity (and to keep the groupies in line).

Homemade Pizza: A new (and inexpensive) family tradition

By E. E. Kane

A family pizza night can be an incredibly cheap, fun and tasty way to start a new family tradition. Even small kids can get involved!

Step One:

Choose one night of the week when your family is normally home. A weekend night is ideal during the school year, because then normal duties (especially homework) can be postponed.

Step Two:

Preparation is the key for making homemade pizza. If you choose to make your own pizza crust, research a recipe online. Decide what toppings you want and prepare them beforehand. Leftovers may even work as toppings. Try meatloaf or mac and cheese for a slightly more exotic pizza.

Step Three:

Get your kids involved in rolling the dough and shaping the edge of the crust. Keep in mind that having kids help in the kitchen doesn't always mean that things will go faster. In fact, the opposite is usually true. Little hands need supervision. With your little one at your side, you can teach math (counting toppings), carefulness (spreading the cheese only on the pizza), and creativity (they may surprise you with the toppings they want to pile on).



Sure, making a homemade pizza takes a little more effort, but if you train your children right and teach them to enjoy preparing food, they'll be cooking full-course meals for you in their teens. And they might just keep talking to you along the way.

Budget Baby Games: EXPLORING TEXTURES

By Daniel Moss

Games that promote your baby's sense of touch are easy to play and important for your baby's understanding of the world.

There is no need to spend lots of money on toys when your child is young. Many household objects are interesting enough to entertain young minds. These simple games will help with your child's brain development and strengthen the bond you have with your baby.

Three to Six Months: The Stroking Game

Stroke different parts of your baby's body while telling them the names of each body part: head, back, arms, hands, legs and feet. This will help your baby feel emotionally secure and is great for bonding.

Six to Nine Months: The Adventure Trail

While holding your baby, take a walk around the house, touching different objects and describing how they feel. Help your baby touch the objects. For example, place your hand inside the refrigerator and say, "The fridge is cold." As well as helping your baby to discover new textures and sensations, this game will also improve your baby's understanding of language.

Nine to 12 Months: What's in the Box?

Find a small box and put various objects inside. The objects should have different shapes and textures. For example, you could use various pieces of fabric, a furry toy, bubble wrap, and a plastic cup. Sit on the floor with your baby. Pick out an object and describe what it feels like. Let your baby touch the object, then put it back into the box. Do the same with the other objects. This game will help improve your baby's tactile awareness and language skills.

