

Strengthen Extended Family Ties

I have listed just a few of the ideas for themes and activities that we have done at our girls overnighter or as we call it our “Women’s Retreat”. We started this for all the girls in our family, sisters, sister-in laws, cousins, and grandmother.

At each retreat we have girly food, a different girl tells or reads a bed time story, we each have a charm bracelet, we get a charm that represents the theme for that night like a paper doll, sock, shoe, temple, valentine, witch, P.J. pants, snowman, etc. you can find inexpensive charms on line with the bracelet. We made up a booklet for the girls to write what we have done at each retreat so the girls can remember what each charm is for.

We always have a lot of fun. Be creative. Find out what everyone’s interests are and go from there.

*When I refer to girls I am also referring to the moms and grandmother at our retreats

1. We love paper dolls. Every retreat we bring our paper dolls. We cut out, color, just admire, or play with our paper dolls. You can go on line to find wonderful inexpensive paper dolls. From old fashion to magnetic. They are a lot of fun.
2. Center your whole night around paper dolls. Have each of the girls bring a paper doll wrapped like a present. Each girl gets a number to show which order she will pick her present in. Every one gets a new and different doll. They loved this. Theme your night around a certain doll like Pride and Prejudice. Get every one the paper doll then watch the movie.
3. We had a favorite sock contest. Each girl wears her favorite socks. Put a number on each girl. Every one votes for two of their favorite socks by putting down the number. We gave out prizes for the top winners. Each girl got a cute certificate with things like Cutest kitty socks, the Wildest, Loudest Color, etc. written on it.
4. Have a sock hop Play jacks, jump rope, and hula hoop. Play 50’s music. Eat and hamburgers and have shakes

5. Make sock snowmen
Take a new white sock and fill with rice or wheat. Leave about two inches at the top to turn down over the top of the head to make a hat. Tie a string around two sections to create three balls. Glue tiny black beads for eyes and mouth buttons where buttons go and piece of fabric cut into a strip for the scarf. Soooo cute.
6. We had a lot of laughs the night we had a shoe contest.
A survey was sent to each girl asking things like how many shoes do you own, what is the ugliest pair you own, which pair is your smelliest? We then gave prizes to the girl with the least, the most, the oldest, you get the picture. Make up your own questions and have fun.
7. We have done Humanitarian Projects.
Dolls in a blanket
The Alphabet books
Pretty picture books
8. We made beaded temples
Numbers 6, 7, and 9 helped the girls pass off a requirement for their Gospel in Action or Personal Progress.
9. Each girl made a porcelain doll
10. We had a self defense night
Get some one to come and teach the girls How to be safe, like never closing the Shower curtain when it is not being used because that is where intruders will hide. We also learned little tricks on how to get away if some one has grabbed them. this was a great teaching night.
11. Have a pajama party
We had each girl sew their own pants the night of our retreat. The joy that the girls showed from learning a new skill was priceless. We all got matching t-shirts.
12. Each girl made a rag quilt out of the scraps from the PJ's
We bought other fabric to coordinate with the scraps to fill in and on the back. All the quilts were so nice.

13. We made beef jerky for all of the boys in our family for Christmas

We used hamburger. We put in all the ingredients then we rolled the hamburger out like sugar cookies and the girls cut out hearts and stars and Christmas shapes we put them in the dehydrator and by morning each girl had her gift for her family done and ready to wrap.

14. One of our favorites was a Valentine exchange.

We had each girl bring valentines, either hand made or store bought, with a personal note written on it for every girl. We then decorated plastic pencil boxes to use as our mail boxes. We had a best box contest and had the girls vote on three of their favorite ones. Then we distributed our valentines. The girls were so happy and surprised at the nice things that all of the cousins, aunts, and sisters wrote to each other. This activity really helped them to grow closer to each other.

15. The girls had so much fun with the valentines that they wanted to do a Halloween card exchange.

We did this much like the valentines. The girls really got into this one and had cute little surprises with each card. We decorated brown paper sacks for our mail boxes. We used die cuts of tomb stones, ghosts, bats, a moon, a haunted house. The girls glued and colored. We had some spooktacular bags. And again they saw themselves through someone else's eyes. This brought them closer to each other. And boosted their self esteem.

16. Cookie exchange

Each girl made her favorite cookie then we exchanged with each other.

The whole point is we are learning that our family is our greatest support system. We have come to know one another as never before. We are learning to turn to each other in good times and bad times. The retreats have become a wonderful blessing for our entire family.