

January 2026

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Explore!

Let's start 2026 off with getting outside! The [First Day Hike](#) is an initiative of the American State Parks organization encouraging everyone to get outside and take a hike in a park to launch the New Year. Hundreds of guided hikes are offered in all 50 states. Check out the Iowa DNR website for a list of First Day Hikes near you or create your own!



National Puzzle Day

Each year on January 29th, National Puzzle Day recognizes how exercising our brains with puzzles is just one of the many benefits. Whether it's a crossword, jigsaw, trivia, word searches, Sudoku, puzzles put our minds to work. Spending time daily working on puzzles improves memory, cognitive function, and problem-solving skills. Try it out each Friday this month.

Brenton Skating Plaza (DSM)

Jan. 24th: Sensory Skate: a time when those with sensory processing challenges are invited to ice skate. 9:30-11:30am (\$5.00)

Jan. 19th: Donate a non-perishable food item for free admission and skate rental from 12:00pm-9:00pm

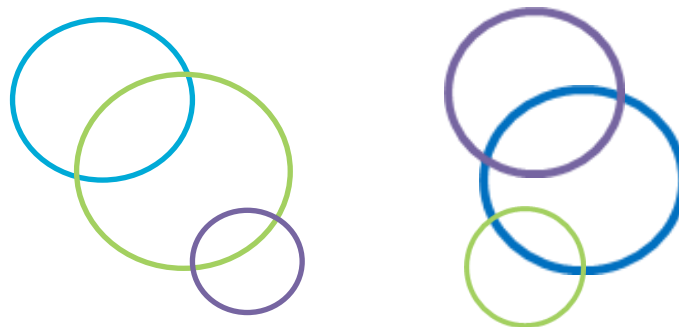
National Sunday Supper Day

This day encourages families to gather around the table, enjoy a meal and a conversation together each year on the second Sunday in January. Families are busy with after-school activities, jobs and homework. This day aims to bring families back together in the kitchen and around the dinner table. Try to set aside time each Sunday during the month of January to sit down as a family.

Try a new family recipe:

Check out the Family Dinner Project at:

[The Family Dinner Project - The Family Dinner Project](#)



One Hour of Physical Activity

In the “1” of **5210**, the goal is to get **one hour of physical activity each day**. An hour might sound like a lot, especially on a busy schedule, but it doesn’t have to happen all at once! You can break it into smaller chunks throughout the day.

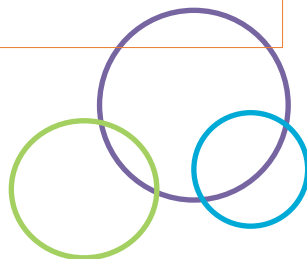
Try aiming for **four 15-minute activity bursts**. Mix it up with your favorite exercises or try something new each time—anything that gets you moving counts!

Take a Walk

Even in cold weather, winter walks offer big benefits for kids and families:

- **Boosts health:** Fresh air and movement help children burn energy and stay active.
- **Improves mood:** Natural light and outdoor time lift spirits during darker months.
- **Encourages curiosity:** Snow, tracks, and winter wildlife spark exploration and learning.
- **Strengthens family time:** Walks create simple, screen-free moments together.

For an electronic version with clickable links, go to: <https://www.unitypoint.org/blankchildrens/fitness-and-nutrition-calendar.aspx>



National Soup Month

January is National Soup Month—a great time for families to enjoy warm, healthy meals together.

Ideas to make healthier soups:

- **Add veggies:** Carrots, peas, spinach, tomatoes—easy nutrition in every bowl.
- **Pick lean proteins:** Chicken, turkey, beans, or lentils for hearty, healthy energy.
- **Use whole grains:** Try brown rice, barley, or whole-wheat noodles.
- **Watch the salt:** Choose low sodium broth and season with herbs or garlic.
- **Let kids help:** Stirring, washing veggies, or sprinkling herbs builds excitement.

Healthy Bars

[10+ Healthy Snack Bar Recipes](#)

Try out these recipes for delicious, healthy snack bars! Making your own bars gives you full control over the ingredients and lets you customize them with your favorite add-ins—nuts, seeds, dried fruits, or even a few chocolate chips. They can also be much more cost-effective than store-bought options.

Each Wednesday in January, give one of these quick and easy recipes a try and enjoy a wholesome, homemade snack all week long.



Blank Children's Hospital
UnityPoint Health

A department of UnityPoint Health – Des Moines – Iowa Methodist Medical Center