



BRIGHTON AND MID MICHIGAN

FAMILY ADVENTURE GUIDE

10 FAMILY ADVENTURES
TO TRY THIS YEAR (AND
REMEMBER FOREVER)

WELCOME FRIENDS



Hello adventurous people! My name is Em and I am so glad you are here.

This guide was born from a simple truth I've learned as a mom and a photographer: the moments we remember most usually start with "Let's just go."

These aren't big, expensive trips or perfectly planned outings. They're the kinds of everyday adventures that feel like freedom to kids and grounding to grown-ups.

I made this list to spark ideas—for your family and for myself. And maybe, just maybe, to help you see that your next photo session doesn't have to feel like a "session" at all.

Just real life. Real movement. Real connection.

With love,

Em

ADVENTURE



how to use this guide

**You don't need to do everything on
this list.**

**Pick one idea. Or two. Or save it for a
day when everyone feels a little
restless.**

**If an adventure feels especially
meaningful, joyful, or very you—it
might make the perfect Adventure
Session.**

These days are worth remembering.



1. Sledding in Fresh Snow

RED CHEEKS, FROZEN MITTENS, AND “JUST ONE MORE RUN.”

Ideal ages: 3+

Where to go:

- Kensington Metropark – Hills and open snow spaces for classic sled runs.
- Genoa Township Park – Known sledding hill in winter.
- Granger Meadows Park – A Lansing classic with a big hill and stairs to climb back up!



2. Fishing

THERE'S SOMETHING GROUNDING ABOUT
STANDING SIDE BY SIDE, WAITING, TALKING,
WATCHING THE WATER.

Local ideas:

- Kensington Metropark — Kent Lake shoreline fishing with shaded spots for slow summer and early fall days.
- Brighton Recreation Area — Several small lakes and quiet banks, perfect for beginners.
- Spring Mill Pond - tucked in the back of Island Lake State Park, this little pond is a favorite spot for fishing.



3. Picnic at Golden Hour

THIS ONE IS LESS ABOUT THE FOOD AND MORE ABOUT THE LIGHT, THE LINGERING, AND THE WAY TIME SLOWS.

Ideal ages: All ages, infants to grandparents

Local ideas:

- Genoa Township Park — Open fields and picnic tables that glow at sunset.
- Your own backyard! Who says you can't have an adventure and a picnic at home?!
- Frances Park (Lansing) — Wide grassy spaces for a relaxed family spread.



4. Skateboarding

WIND IN THEIR HAIR, SCRAPED KNEES, BIG SMILES. LET THEM LEAD THE WAY.

Ideal ages: ~6–14

Local ideas:

- Genoa Township Park — Wide paved paths, great for beginners.
- Downtown Brighton - stop and check out the shops along the way.
- Crego Park — Easy paths near the water for a gentle roll.

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5. Hiking Together

NOT EVERY HIKE NEEDS A DESTINATION.
SOMETIMES THE WALK IS THE POINT.

Ideal ages: All ages (choose trails based on energy levels)

Local ideas:

- Huron Meadows Metropark — Gentle trails and wildflower fields.
- Kensington Nature Center - a chance to hike and feed the birds.
- Howell Nature Center — Family-friendly loops with lots to notice along the way.

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6. Indoor Play Cafe'

FOR RAINY AFTERNOONS, WINTER MORNINGS, OR DAYS WHEN EVERYONE NEEDS A RESET.

Ideal ages: ~1-6

Local idea:

- Little Owls Play Cafe in Hartland (coming spring 2026!!)
- Castaway Play Cafe in Howell. Sensory play and imaginative fun in a cozy indoor space.

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7. Reading and Board Games

QUIET MOMENTS. SOFT LIGHT. STORIES
STACKED ON THE COFFEE TABLE.

Ideal ages: All ages

These are the kinds of memories that don't announce themselves loudly — but linger long after the day ends.

How to make it special:

- Choose a favorite family book or a simple board game.
- Light a fire or turn on soft lamps.
- Let the moment be cozy, not productive.

Perfect for:

Rainy afternoons, winter evenings, or anytime the world feels a little too fast.

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8. Creek Stomping & Rock Collecting

MESSY SHOES. ROLLED-UP PANTS. POCKETS FULL OF TREASURES.

Ideal ages: ~3+ (with supervision)

Local ideas:

- Shallow creek areas at Kensington Metropark
- Nature trails with water access at Brighton Recreation Area
- Quiet stream edges at Proud Lake Recreation Area

How to make it special:

- Bring a small bucket or bag for collected rocks.
- Let kids lead the pace and direction.
- Don't rush — wandering is the whole point.



9. Baking Day at Home

FLOUR ON THE COUNTER. MUSIC PLAYING IN THE BACKGROUND. HANDS STICKY WITH DOUGH.

Ideal ages: All ages (toddlers to teens)

How to make it special:

- Choose one simple recipe (cookies, banana bread, muffins).
- Let kids measure, stir, and sneak tastes.
- Open a window, play an old playlist, and let the kitchen feel lived in.

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10. Coffee & Music Morning

COFFEE BREWING. VINYL SPINNING OR A FAMILIAR PLAYLIST HUMMING IN THE BACKGROUND. KIDS DANCING IN SOCKS. SOMEONE LEANING ON THE COUNTER JUST LISTENING.

Ideal ages: All ages

Ideas to center the morning around:

- Making coffee or cocoa together
- Putting on a record or shared family playlist or gather around a musical instrument
- Dancing in the kitchen or swaying with little ones
- Quiet moments of listening and being near one another

How to make it special:

- Choose music that means something to your family — old hymns, childhood favorites, or the songs you always play on weekends

If one of these ideas sparked something in you, I'd love to help you turn it into a story worth remembering.

These kinds of ordinary, meaningful moments — the ones that feel like home — are exactly what I love to photograph. Whether that looks like a quiet morning in your kitchen or an adventure outside together, there's no pressure to perform. Just space to be yourselves.

If you ever want help preserving a season like this, I'm here.

With love,

Em