Life may have been so busy for your family recently, with everyone going a different direction, that you may need to find an easy way to reconnect. Something as simple as spending a day at the park may be just what your family needs.

♦ Different types of parks with different types of activities are available in different areas of the country; spend some time investigating the options near you.

♦ There may be a large park with extensive activities available within driving distance from you or you may prefer a small park near your home; the choice you make will determine what you can do as a family on this day.

♦ A large park may offer everything you need, such as boating, biking, hiking, swimming, volleyball, canoeing, kayaking, etc.; but if you choose a smaller park, you will need to spend more time planning your family’s activities.

♦ Activity options include playing catch with a football, frisbee, baseball, or softball. You also might consider lawn croquet or badminton.

♦ You could even play a small game of touch football or frisbee golf. Be creative, and most of all, have fun together!

How will this activity promote the parent-teen relationship?

Simply spending quality time together as a family apart from the daily routine can help a family to reconnect.

The drive to and from the park as well as the relaxed time spent playing games or sitting around a fire can improve communication, especially regarding issues often ignored or overlooked in the normal routine of life.

Self-esteem and self-confidence can be improved by playing games, simply because family members encourage one another, laugh and have fun together.

Don’t forget this . . .

• No day at the park is complete without a cookout!
• Plan ahead for the cookout by making sure the proper equipment is available at the park (e.g., grill, table, etc.) or bringing your own.
• Prepare a family favorite with all the fixin’s and get everyone involved in setting and cleaning it up.