



DawnJuntilla

**ActivityTree**  
Co-founder

## Two Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed

—Meg Kelly

**Dawn Juntilla was a practicing lawyer, new mom and wife. With a two-and-a-half year old, and a second child on the way, Dawn wanted to find a better way to balance work and family. She found it - and a whole new career - looking for classes to keep her toddler active.**

The temptation to let children loll in front of a screen can be huge, especially when the weather is miserable. It was a temptation Dawn was determined to resist. Besides knowing American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends children under the age of two don't have any screen time, and screen time for older kids is limited to two hours a day, she wanted her children moving.

"So much of healthy brain development depends on movement," says Dawn. "I wanted to enroll my daughter, in a class. I was thinking gymnastics or dance, but wasn't sure which one was right for her. I also wanted a class that was nearby."

Dawn searched the internet and wound up with more questions than answers. "There were so many classes. I had no idea which one was right for my daughter. 'Dance' and 'gymnastics' turned out to pretty general terms, but what children can do at certain ages is pretty specific."

After spending hours looking for a site that provided this kind of information, Dawn realized it didn't exist. But it could.

"Suddenly I'm thinking, 'Wouldn't it be great if there was one? A place that told parents which classes were out there, helped them determine if the classes were developmentally appropriate, and showed them which ones were close to home.'"

Dawn thought starting a business to help other busy moms find the right classes and camps for their kids might be a good idea. Her family's enthusiastic response convinced her.

"My brother especially thought it was a great idea. He has four active children and is always looking for places where they can be challenged mentally and physically."

Dawn quit her job and with her brother Dale and their dad, launched *ActivityTree* in 2008. "Initially, we had three goals. The first was to

For more information go to  
[www.healthyweightcommit.org](http://www.healthyweightcommit.org)



Dawn Juntilla

**ActivityTree**  
Co-founder

## Two Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed Continued

become a valuable resource, which meant finding out if anyone, besides me and my brother, wanted this resource. We started small, with local listings, and waited to see if we had discovered a gap in the market place.”

They had. “The response was tremendous,” Dawn says. “Our family adventure took off.”

*ActivityTree’s* growth was so rapid that they expanded the site nationally just seven months later. “We also expanded our team. Now, we work with a group of wonderful, skilled people, who are always coming up with ideas that relate to kids and their active lives.”

With *ActivityTree’s* first goal met, they started focusing on the second one: to help make kid’s activities and camps more affordable.

“Classes are an extra expense. But kids need to be active, no matter what the family budget, so we’ve started partnering with activity providers to offer discounts. We’ve also started our own scholarship program, which is available to all families.”

Another savvy addition to *ActivityTree’s* well-designed website site is a blog.

“By going to our website and clicking on ‘Blog’, moms can find advice from experts and other moms. They can also talk to each other, or ask experts a specific question. It’s a great way to find out when a child is old enough to start specific activities, and how the child benefits from doing the activity.”

*ActivityTree* continues to grow and add content. The website has expanded to include information on day camps, toddler classes, venues for active birthday parties, as well as tutoring and pre-school options.

“And because every kid needs exercise, we’re adding programs and camps for kids with special needs, such as ADHD, cancer and learning disabilities.”

The third goal for *ActivityTree*, “To provide on-line registration for any place in the country, so parents can coordinate and register the entire



DawnJuntilla

**ActivityTree**  
Co-founder

## Two Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed Continued

family in one sitting,” is still in the future. However, judging from what Dawn and her team at *ActivityTree* have already accomplished, not the distant one.

To find kids’ classes, lessons and camps, or visit the blog, go to [www.activitytree.com](http://www.activitytree.com).

*ActivityTree* is a partner of Healthy Weight Commitment Foundation.

—By Meg Kelly