



Student Mental Health and Addictions Newsletter June 2019

YRDSB Mental Health services are provided by YRDSB psychology and social work personnel

Summer is almost here! Low Key Activities to Have Fun and Be Well!

Holidays can be a great time to bond with your children and maybe even let your own inner child come out to play. But it can also be a stressful time when kids can misbehave because of boredom. It's best to put a little bit of advanced planning into the summer holidays and prepare yourself with an array of activities to keep the little ones out of mischief.

Start by planning each week in advance. If the kids know they have things to look forward to it will make for happier more relaxed children and teens. Also be sure to get the children involved in the planning. They will be less likely to complain about the activities chosen if they have taken part in the decision-making. Have a range of activities to select from: stuff to do at home, in the garden, outdoors and the odd activity that costs money to do.

1. **Cooking and Baking:** Once a week, plan a cooking or baking day. Involve the kids in the process from the beginning – let them choose from a selection of recipes that you have ingredients for. If the child can read, get them to read from the recipe book. Step by step, help them to work through the instructions. Try to avoid the temptation of doing it yourself.
2. **Make an obstacle course.** Involve the kids in assembling an obstacle course in the back yard. Old piece of wood, boxes, buckets, garden chairs – anything that can be jumped over, under or around. Tell the children to time each other around the obstacle course. The course can be completed on a bicycle, scooter, skateboard, or simply by running.
3. **Build a garden patch.** Dedicate a small patch in the garden to the kids. Plant flowers, herbs, lettuce – anything that grows quickly and gives them the satisfaction of having produced something.
4. **Go camping.** Build a tent indoors or outdoors with blankets and sheets. Once the tent is up, give them a picnic to take with them.

5. Go on Picnics. You don't have to go far to have a picnic – even a picnic in the back yard is fun! Give them whatever you have in the fridge. You'd be amazed how once it is packed in a plastic container and eaten on a blanket on the grass, how much the atmosphere romanticizes the most boring of sandwiches.
6. Have a treasure hunt. Make the treasure map with clues to find some treasure you have hidden somewhere in the garden. It doesn't have to be expensive or big – any little treat will be exciting when it is found outdoors.
7. Get Jamming. Grab some musical instruments – things like bongos, shakers or tambourines and get jamming. Get your kids to sing and dance along
8. Make a Movie. Using an iPhone or moviemaker and action figures around the home.
9. Have a garage sale. Get the kids to clear out their rooms and have a garage sale. Pool all the money together and use it to pay for an outing for the whole family.
10. Visit the library. Use your local library regularly. In most libraries, you can get more than books. You can get movies and music. Make a day out of it. Do some reading while you're there instead of getting some books and heading home. Give your children a love of books – it is one of the best gifts you can give them.
11. Have a "chill day". With all that activity planned, the kids will also need some down time. Make sure you plan some days where you just chill, watch some movies, read some books, and take it easy.

(Source lifehack.org)

Suggested Reading

School Mental Health Ontario– [Every Day Mental Health Classroom resource](#)

