



Tender Hearts Child Therapy Center

Parent Newsletter

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The Benefits of a Summer Routine

While the summer break is generally an enjoyable time for kids, parents often struggle with activities to keep daily schedules full and prevent boredom.

For nine months of the year, children are accustomed to daily routines-wake up and get ready for school in the morning, a structured day at school, ball practice in the evening, homework time, and so on. But in the summer things change. Pretty soon parents find themselves struggling with things to do to entertain their kids in an attempt to avoid the all too familiar sibling conflicts and defiance that all parents are familiar with.

So, what can a parent do to maintain some type of structure or routine over the summer months and hopefully avoid the problems that may arise from a total lack of structure? Creating a summer routine that is posted on the refrigerator is a good place to start. Parents should include their children in the process. Just like adults, kids are more likely to follow or "buy into" something they helped to create. Fun activities need not cost a fortune- a trip to the park, a visit to the nature center, or maybe a day at the movies every few weeks is a good place to start. Remember that each day need not be full of community-based activities. Watching TV in the heat of the afternoon or playing catch in the yard in the evening are just as good as going to the movies.

Another way to help pass the time during the summer months is to assign more time-consuming chores that you may not be able to assign during the school year. It is important for kids to learn responsibility, and chores are a great way to do this. I'm sure everyone knows the phrase "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." Well, the same works in reverse as well. While chores are not as fun for children as playing in the pool, they do serve a purpose and summer is a great time to establish and implement a chore chart as well.

The idea is to have a simple schedule or routine that children and parents can follow. Children are familiar with schedules and routines during the school year and it helps to have something in place during the summer months as well. Make sure to include fun activities with a splash of responsibility (i.e. chores) and you will have a good all-around summer schedule that works for both children and parents alike!