

Dear Counselling Corner:

Do you have some activities for me to support my child’s learning which are engaging and fun for evenings and weekends, for inside or outside. Thanks!

Mom

Dear Mom

As I keep saying to our wonderful parents, good for you! There are many activities which parents can do to support their child’s learning. Here are some ideas:

- **Do regular activities with your child, everyday if possible!** Baking, making shopping lists, creating a daily schedule, growing a vegetable garden or caring for a pet involves a range of subject areas including science, math, writing and art! Get your child actively involved in things which need to be done each day. Do you have a pet? Give your child a regular role to play in its care. What is the plan for dinner? Sit down with your child and plan a healthy meal. Better yet, organize the menu for the whole week and delegate who will be ‘in charge’ of preparing a meal. Teach your child how to help with laundry, making their bed or putting the shopping away. Make learning fun, delightful and meaningful.
- **Encourage your child to find appropriate interest areas of their own.** Maybe your child would like to learn about another country, a sports team, an animal, or computers. Together with your child, begin an educational journey together to learn more.
- **Schedule physical activity into the day.** Children learn better when they have opportunities to be physically active. Check out Nancy Barile’s article which goes into depth about this topic:
<https://www.wgu.edu/heyteach/article/exercise-and-brain-how-fitness-impacts-learning1801.html>
- **Make a daily schedule.** I am a huge believer in having a plan for the day and even a rough one for the upcoming week. Creating a schedule with your child empowers her/him to take some ownership about upcoming activities. Schedules help to support your child’s development and build on many executive functioning skills including planning, organization, problem solving, initiation, monitoring of actions and mental flexibility. Schedules

also reduce behaviour challenges by helping children to know what to expect and to feel safe.

- **Read, read and read some more!** I cannot stress this enough. Set a time each day for your child to read. Read with them to get started if they are a reluctant reader. Be sure to choose books which interest them. Reading shows your child that this is something which you value. Once you are done, encourage your child to share what they have read. As I have said in the past, when our daughters were elementary aged, I made it an expectation that they had to earn their screen time (which included video games and television shows). For every hour they read, they earned one hour of age appropriate screen time. At first, they were irritated with me, but very quickly as their reading skills improved, they both became much more interested in reading. Now that they are much older, they are both avid readers, often choosing to read a good book instead of spending time on their screens. Their love for reaching has had a very positive impact on their education.
- **Does your child know how to tell time using both a digital and analog clock?** If not, this may be a learning goal this spring. Learning how to tell the time is covered at school, but regular practice at home using both a digital and analog clock is very helpful and empowering for children. Check out this website: <https://www.verywellfamily.com/teach-your-child-to-tell-time-5208351#:~:text=Teach%20them%20to%20first%20identify,a%20time%20you%20give%20them.>

The Counselling Corner is intended to offer some helpful ideas, encouragement and insight on a variety of topics to support your child's social and emotional learning. Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns at hchang@sd43.bc.ca.

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