

# Summer holidays – Time to Unwind and De-stress

## Description

### Summer Breeze... Makes Me Feel Good...

A British survey found that more than one third of parents find that the summer break sometimes leaves them feeling dazed, confused and in need of a holiday themselves! So now that the examination season is over, the pressure is off children and parents, everyone gets to unwind and start relaxing. How can you make sure you are not one of the parents left completely exhausted?

The strategies here may help you.

### Helping Children to Enjoy the Summer Holiday

Planning ahead can be really helpful as it gives everyone an opportunity to have something to look forward to and can act as a lovely reward to be earned after working hard on homework tasks and revision tasks. Some parents report that having a wall planner chart to cover all the weeks of the summer holidays can be really helpful in ensuring that children know what the 'plan is'. They can see when they have free choice time to decide what they would like to do and when set plans are in place. The anticipation of events can be a really exciting time for everyone. Encourage children to help fill in the plan so that it is colourful and fun to look at.

- Have a box of materials ready with anything from hand craft textiles to coloured pencils so that children know exactly where to go if they want to do something creative and it also means they have the option of being away from too much screen play.
- Organise play dates for younger children, taking it in turns with other friends or family so that the children have lots of time for social interaction, not to mention adults having some time for rest and relaxation or time to organise yet another hundred things as is often the case.
- Some parents find that having a rule that says 'no screen play between certain times' encourages quality family time to cook together or bake something or plan an upcoming event on the wall chart or do something outdoors.
- Taking part in fun educational activities at least once a week can also mean that brains continue to tick over, albeit in a more relaxed way. So anything from trips to the library to writing post cards to creating newspaper articles or writing adventure stories could be encouraged.
- Children enjoy the summer holidays, as they have more freedom than during school time. This is their time to unwind and de-stress.

### Helping Adults to Enjoy the Summer Holiday

So what about the adults – what can make summer relaxing for them given the importance of relaxation to mental and physical well-being? Try some of the following and see what benefits you the most.

- As a teenager it was compulsory to stay in bed for as long as possible. As adults we just don't have to do this. We are allowed to enjoy the whole day.

- However this also means that we don't have to go to bed late any more. We can leave that to the young folk too if we want to and make our way up the stairs at 9.30pm.
- Swimming at the pool especially one with a Jacuzzi and steam room. Remember when you used to take your children and it became somewhat of a chore and exhausting although you didn't really get to do any swimming. It is a different experience as an adult.
- This brings me on to exercise. This is the time to find out what kind of exercise suits you that you could carry on doing before work resumes in September. Try a Zumba class, a yoga session, power walk. There is something out there for everyone.
- Read for fun. Yes isn't it wonderful to wander into a book shop and choose a couple of fiction books to savour and enjoy in your own time.
- Get rid of things. Clear it all out. Take it down to the local charity shop and don't be tempted to buy it back again.
- Find somewhere you like to go. It may be a café, or a park, or a gallery. Go several times and get to know it and enjoy it.
- And finally... Spend time with family and friends, even if that means doing all those things that children and teenagers do.

