

# Take the boredom out of the holidays

There are still a few weeks left of the school holidays, a time when boredom can set in and the kids get restless.

Don't despair - there are many ways you and your family can have a special holiday which will be long remembered.

Holidays need to be about doing a lot of different things, such as board games, walks, backyard cricket, going to a movie – not spending hours a day on Facebook and Twitter.

Many of us spend so much time in pressure situations in front of computers, studying or working. To simply get out and stretch our legs on a family stroll – with a dog if you have one - is a great way of creating a simple and enjoyable activity.

If it's something you never get to do as a family during the year, then the kids will appreciate the sheer novelty of walking and talking with relaxed parents.

Even in this social networking age, board games still have an important place in the family holiday. While it's hard to seat six people around a computer screen, games such as Monopoly and Trivial Pursuit are ideal for that number and are still great fun.

It's important to take the kids out of their normal schedule of school and activities. Doing things with the kids is a bit like having a bank account: the more time you spend with them doing fun things, the bigger your goodwill deposit will be and the more interest you will earn.

In terms of healthy family functioning, kids need to see parents relax and have time for them. It can be quite an eye-opener for the child of a busy executive or tradie who works very long hours to suddenly suggest a hit of badminton or a bike ride.

Holiday time is also a chance to relax a few family rules that relate to routine. Because the kids don't have to be at school, it doesn't really matter what time you have lunch or dinner. Why not liberate yourself by ignoring your watch and eating when your family's stomach clocks dictate?

Have a cook-up of all the treats the kids love and involve them in the process. You might even find yourself getting a buzz out of it too.

Spending time with our children gives us more emotional time and more space in our brains to relate to them.

It doesn't really matter what you do on holidays, as long as it's something you do together and it's fun. The time you spend is what they will treasure and remember in future years.

## Survival tips

- **Do different things from the normal busy routine.**
- **Don't be slaves to the clock. Change over to a leisurely "holiday clock".**
- **Check local libraries and papers for low-cost kids' activities.**
- **Get together with friends for a picnic in the park or at the beach and a game of cricket or footy.**