

Time for Togetherness

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Families are busy these days! After work, school, extra-curricular activities, meetings, housework and the other inevitable realities of life, it can be difficult to find time for quality moments with your children. However, your children need to spend meaningful time with you. They need to see who you are and how you live your life. Instead of worrying about how many minutes you can spend with your children each day, focus on turning those minutes into memorable moments.

The Benefits of Family Time

- **Feeling Loved and Important** - This is important for any person at any age. Feeling loved, valued and special builds self-esteem and self-worth, which is necessary for a fulfilling life.
- **Modelling Good Behaviour** – Children often mirror the behaviour of the people they spend the most time with. If they aren't spending time with you who are they learning their behaviour, habits and morals from?
- **Learn Children's Strengths** – When you spend quality time with your children, you can identify their assets and potential areas for improvement. Through this, you can help them grow as people by building on their strengths and helping them reach their full potential.



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- **Voice Thoughts and Feelings** – There are many things that happen in a child’s life that they need to talk about. By spending quality time with your children, you are giving them the space and time to share these things with you.
- **Develop Stronger Relationships** – One of the best, and most obvious things about spending quality time with your children is developing stronger relationships with them. Be sure that both parents are spending individual time with each child. This will help not only build memories, but also build trust.



Ages and Stages of Emotional Development

- **Ages 6 to 8**

Emotionally, children 6 to 8 years old are very focused on themselves. Some things we can do to help them with their emotional development include; keeping a positive attitude when around them. Being supportive and encouraging, and planning activities that focus more on cooperation rather than competition.

- **Ages 9 to 11**

At this stage children want everything to be fair or equal. They often judge things in absolutes, with very little middle ground. When spending time with them, try to place emphasis on the individual progress they make. Try not to compare them to their siblings or friends. Rather recognise each child for his or her individual strengths.

- **Ages 12 to 14**

Children at this age tend to compare themselves to others, and are struggling with fluctuating emotions. We can help them explore their identity, values and beliefs by providing activities that challenge their thinking in these areas. Let them assume responsibility for planning events and activities and set expectations that they follow through with their duties.

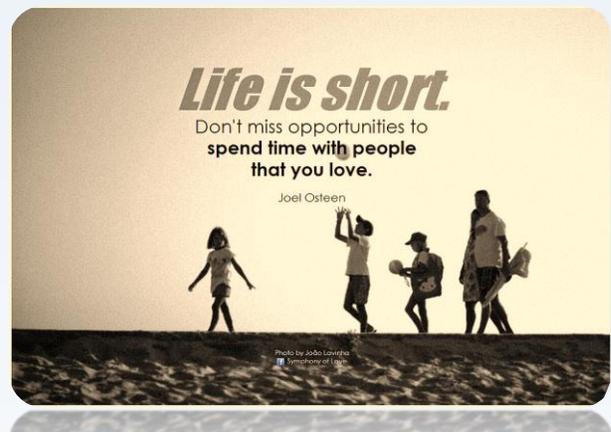
- **Ages 15 to 18**

Emotional characteristics of 15 to 18 year olds centre around respect, developing confidence and developing independence. Continue to challenge their thinking on identity, values, and beliefs. Encourage them to work in youth/adult partnerships to achieve common goals.

Quality Time - What Does It Look Like?

Here are 20 activities that you and your child might enjoy doing together these holidays!

- 🕒 Attend a concert, show or movie together.
- 🕒 Go on a family bike ride.
- 🕒 Read a book together.
- 🕒 Set up easels and paint pictures outdoors.
- 🕒 Visit your local science museum.
- 🕒 Put on an impromptu play.
- 🕒 Put together a scavenger hunt.
- 🕒 Visit a trampoline park.
- 🕒 Sprout beans in a jar that you can plant in the garden.
- 🕒 Learn how to play musical instruments together.
- 🕒 Create a nature journal.
- 🕒 Teach them to play chess (or learn with them).
- 🕒 Go roller-skating.
- 🕒 Visit a living history museum.
- 🕒 Have a water balloon fight in the backyard.
- 🕒 Look at the moon with a telescope or binoculars.
- 🕒 Play 20 questions.
- 🕒 Go bowling.
- 🕒 Put together a time capsule and bury it in the backyard.



Best wishes for the Festive Season!
The Psychology Team

