



March Counsellor's Corner

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March's Topic: Let the Days of Boredom Begin!

Read to the end! Exciting Prizes to be Won!!!

Children across the valley are counting down the days until Spring Break. Parents are looking forward to not having to make lunches or pry their children from their beds in the morning. Some parents have mixed feelings about the approaching 2 week vacation, worrying about how to keep their child "entertained" (read: out of trouble) and wondering how many hours into the break they will hear the first cry of, "I'm bored!"

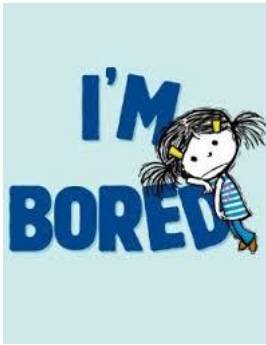
Think back to your seemingly endless summers as a child. Where do your best memories come from? Was it planned-to-the-minute scheduled activities that your parents organized for you, or was it random, creative, unplanned days outside that resulted in lifelong friendships and positive memories? Those who work with me (as well as my own children) know that I am always encouraging others to embrace "boredom". Why? This picture pretty much sums it up.



<https://medium.com/@brookpete/thoughts-on-that-viral-of-pic-of-the-smartphone-man-who-didn-t-see-the-humpback-whale-right-there-ad574db3d134>

In addition to not letting the world pass our children by, it is important to recognize the positive impact boredom can have on the brain. Out of boredom comes creativity, because "a restless mind hungers for stimulation" (Clive Thompson, 2017). "Boredom becomes a seeking state because the bored mind is more likely to seek out activities that engage the reward centre of the brain" (Lench, 2017). When we allow that stimulation to come artificially from screen time, we are limiting the brain's ability to access

those areas of fantasy and creativity. We know that the current generation has far less "boredom" time than a generation or two ago. I admit that I am guilty of reaching for my phone as I wait in line at the bank or am waiting for my kids to finish up a practice. I wonder what connections with others I miss (not to mention the sealife swimming by in front of me) when I am filling my spare moments with screen time.



<http://www.shandamc.com/2013/08/a-picture-book-a-project-im-bored-and-how-not-to-be-bored-with-a-potato/>

How do you respond to the common lament, "I'm bored!"? I encourage you to not fix the situation for your child. Instead, my favourite response has always been, "Then you have arrived...most people work their whole lives to get to retirement when they can be bored, you've reached it so early!"or.... "Thanks for letting me know – I'm excited to see how you fill your time!" Once he/she realizes that you are not going to step in to solve the problem, you may be amazed at how creative your child can be. Consider a spring break with decreased access to technology or parent-planned activities. It is reasonable for there to be a daily task/chore for your child to be expected to complete. It is also a worthwhile task at the beginning of

the break to sit as a family and brainstorm a list of simple, fun activities that could be engaged in (remember potato stamping, hopscotch, chalk art on the sidewalk, making jello, playing 7-up with a ball against the side of a building?). Add to the ideas a phone list of trusted friends and refer your child to the list every time they mention having nothing to do.

Attached to this newsletter is a district-wide Mental Health challenge for all families with elementary and middle school aged children in the Valley. We have some fun prizes and entry is based on simply participating in non-screen-related family time between the beginning of spring break and the end of April.

For more information or assistance, please contact your child's school counsellor or a community counsellor.

Happy Spring Break!

Spring Mental Wellness Challenge 2019

The fine print:

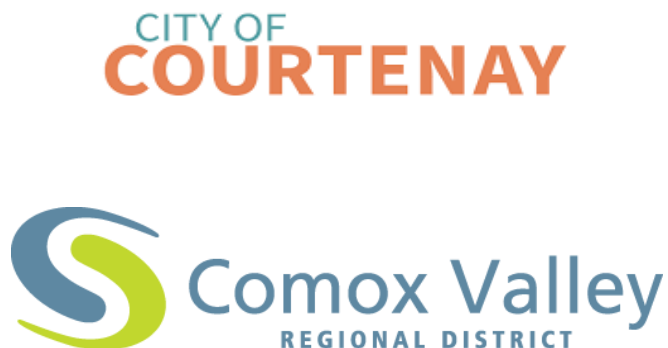
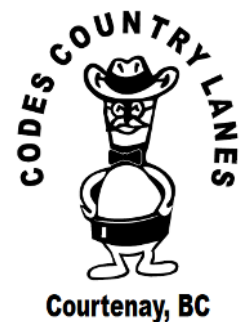
For any of the activities on the attached chart that you complete (in any order), you will receive one entry into the District Draw on May 7, 2019 (Mental Health Day). Complete as many as possible to win great prizes for your family! Have a parent sign on the line beside any activities completed as a family. You can count each one more than once if you like!

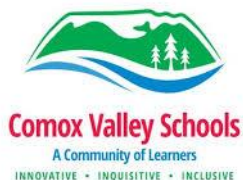
Return your entry to the office at Brooklyn School on Guthrie in Comox or take a photo of the complete form and send your entry to tara.ryan@sd71.bc.ca.

Entries must be submitted by **midnight on April 30, 2019.**

The draw will be held on May 7, 2019.

Prizes provided by these terrific community partners:





Spring Mental Wellness Challenge 2019

Family Name: _____
 Home School: _____

Phone Number: _____
 Age of Children: _____

Activity	Tally (how many times)	Parent Signature
Play a board game		
Plant spring flowers together		
Walk the beach		
Build a family puzzle		
Have a screen-free day		
Do an outside activity that gets your heart rate up		
Together, write 5 kind sticky notes each; drive to a grocery store and put them on random car windows		
Wear your clothes backwards to a beach or park and take a family picture		
Go together to the local library and sign out a book each		
Cook a meal together		
Have a "backwards dinner" (dessert first)		
Spend an entire evening with no lights or screens (careful with the candles!)		
Together, create a "what I love about" list for each family member		
Make sushi or homemade pizza – everyone contributes!		
Swim at the wave pool		
Go bowling		
Play a card game		
Go for a bike ride		
Bake something special for a neighbour		
Do 45 minutes of yard work together		
Look through baby books or old family photos		
Play an outside game		
Have a gratitude day (discuss and practice gratitude throughout the day)		
Family art night – get some canvas from the \$ store		
Eat dinner at the table – screen free!		
Have a family picnic outside or on the living room floor		
Volunteer as a family for an hour		
Plan and complete one random act of kindness for a stranger		
Lego night!		
Go for a walk for at least half an hour		
Have breakfast together at the table – screen free!		
Go hunting for beach glass or shells		
Play Frisbee in the park		
Other:		
Other:		

