

Downtime

- Choose an activity kids love – and parents don't hate.
- Make it regular, brief, and easygoing.
- Don't use the activity as a chance to remind, nag, or bring in worldly worries.
- Adapt the activity so friends can join in.
- Keep it brief.
- Become knowledgeable about the area – natural discussions will follow.
- Be prepared to take kids' lead in off-the-cuff conversations that the activity may trigger.
- Balance between regularly scheduled events, such as a shared TV program, and spontaneous ideas like a quick drive to the mall.
- Parallel time counts- reading alongside each other, doing paperwork and homework nearby.
- Bedtime rituals are still valued – try not to let a serious diagnosis, wrangling, TV, the computer, or the late hour get in the way of a kiss goodnight, a prayer, or an "I love you".