

The Psychosocial Team at BCCFA encompasses three programs: Key Worker Support Services (Burnaby), Family Counselling Support Services (Burnaby and New Westminster) and the Stepping Stones Program (Burnaby, Richmond, Vancouver, North Shore)



Happy Summer Psychosocial Program Families!

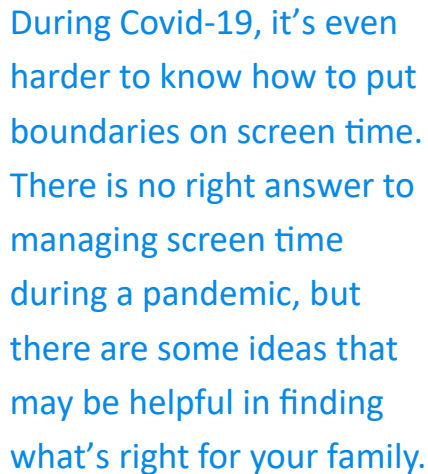
We hope that you are continuing to keep safe and healthy as we navigate the ongoing challenges and changes associated to Covid-19.

The BC Centre for Ability continues to provide virtual services via phone, email and video conferencing. For more information regarding what services are being offered, please reach out to your psychosocial team member.

We know that this summer looks different than usual and we hope that the information and updates in this newsletter will be helpful.



Boundaries and Screen Time



During Covid-19, it's even harder to know how to put boundaries on screen time. There is no right answer to managing screen time during a pandemic, but there are some ideas that may be helpful in finding what's right for your family.

Keep a schedule and stay the course:

Developing set times for screen time can create structure that is helpful to set expectations.

Model healthy screen use:

Children will be more likely to set aside their screens at set times if you lead by example.

Use compassion:

Unstructured screen time can be a source of comfort and entertainment during a stressful time.

Content from: <https://childmind.org/article/screen-time-during-the-coronavirus-crisis/>

Emphasize social connections:

Finding creative ways to connect with friends online and schedule regular family connections. Consider your child's regular social schedule and organize screen time so it makes sense for them.

Brainstorm alternatives:

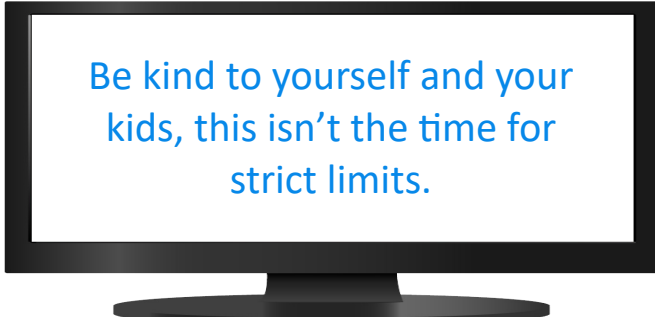
It's helpful to develop an "activity menu" that lists all of your child's preferred non-screen activities to access.

Prioritize and health and wellness:

Evaluating your child's activities can help direct their screen time schedule. You can do this by asking:

- Is my child sleeping enough and eating a somewhat balanced diet?
- Are they getting some form of exercise every day?
- Are they getting some quality time with family?
- Do they use some screen time to keep in touch with friends?
- Are they invested in schoolwork and keeping up with homework?

If the answer to most questions is yes, then extra screen time is likely not a major issue during this time when needed.



Be kind to yourself and your kids, this isn't the time for strict limits.

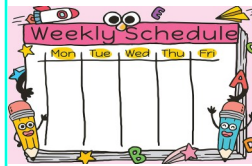
Summer Activity Suggestions

1. Keep academics in the mix

Your child doesn't necessarily have to sit at a desk with a workbook all summer, but the idea is just to make sure that practicing skills is built into your child's daily routines one way or another.



2. Maintain a routine



Following consistent routines is a huge part of academic success. What's more, having a routine lets kids know what to expect each day and reduces their anxiety, which is especially important now that kids are facing a lot of change and uncertainty. Structure and predictability let kids feel safe, stable and in control to some extent.

3. Prioritize time outdoors

It's really important for both physical and mental health for kids to spend time outdoors, and there are lots of ways your family can do that while still following social distancing rules. Some ideas are; Scavenger hunts and obstacle courses, family walks, hikes, bike rides, gardening, spending time at beaches, lakes or pools (following social distancing rules), observing the plants and animals near your home. You might get a bird feeder or encourage your child to identify flowers on your walks.



4. Be smart about screens

Some screen time is inevitable, particularly as so much involves virtual activities, but it's important to ensure non-screen activities are planned (art projects, household skills, fun projects). For more information about screen time, please see page 2.



5. Stay connected



No matter what rules your family decides to follow, it's important that your child maintains connections with friends or family — whether virtually or in person. The idea is to stay safe while also giving your child lots of opportunity to practice social skills and connect with loved ones, so that they can head to school in the fall (whatever that looks like!) feeling confident and supported.

Content from: <https://childmind.org/article/summer-activities-for-kids-with-learning-disorders/>

Virtual Activities for the Summer

ONLINE LEARNING

- 19 12 FAMOUS MUSEUMS OFFER VIRTUAL TOURS (FREE)**
Experience the best museums virtually from your home. Perfect for all ages.
- 20 SCHOLASTIC (FREE)**
Projects and activities to keep children thinking, reading, and growing. Geared for ages 3-9.
- 21 KHAN ACADEMY (FREE)**
Online learning platform for ages 2+. Students learn math, science, technology, art history, and more!
- 22 SAN DIEGO ZOO (FREE)**
Online learning resources for families that help you stay connected with virtual visits anytime you want. Activities include wildlife cams, games, and crafts.
- 23 SEW A SOFTIE (FREE)**
Online sewing patterns and videos to help children, ages 5+, learn to sew.
- 24 HOFFMAN ACADEMY (FREE)**
Online piano lessons, for children of all ages, that empower them with the knowledge and techniques to become true musicians in a supportive, child-friendly way.
- 25 WOW ART (FREE)**
Free daily painting tutorials for children of all ages.

Big Life Journal

For more examples of online activities with links, check out

Big Life Journal's list of 35 Virtual Camps and Activities for Children that can be found here:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1yWPtZ2uvSs4j3nwsL-13eEdyls19iwkX/view>

Finding activities over the summer may be a difficult task with regular programming cancellations and the ongoing restrictions due to Covid-19.

Online activities can provide some things to do when programming is not available, such as those listed here in the visuals here!

ONLINE LEARNING, CONT.

- 26 YOUSICIAN**
Yousician is an online music platform for anyone to learn, play, create, and teach music.
- 27 JAM WITH JAMIE**
A virtual music club for kids ages 0-12. This children's entertainment company that specializes in birthday parties, events, and private classes/playgroups.
- 28 MARCOPOLO LEARNING**
A STEAM and literacy digital learning platform for children ages 3-7 that includes online learning, video lessons, and printable resources.
- 29 TYNKER**
A coding platform where children learn problem-solving, critical thinking skills, and programming in a fun way. Self-paced coding tutorials for children aged 5 - 14+.
- GARDENING**
- 30 KIDS GARDENING (FREE)**
Fun gardening ideas and activities for children of all ages.
- 31 CITY BLOSSOMS (FREE)**
Free gardening resources, lessons, and activities for children of all ages.
- 32 LIFE LAB**
Curriculum and online lessons for education in gardening for grades K-5. Lessons, videos, and fun activities that include garden scavenger hunts and gardening lessons.

Generosity

Generosity affects parts of our brain that lead to us feeling good when we do things for others. This means that when we act in ways that are kind and generous, or even when we see acts of kindness, we're more likely to be in a better mood. Just five generous acts in one day can boost your mood for more than a week!

So, how can you involve generosity and acts of kindness into your regular family routines?

Everyday Generosity:

Acts of kindness can be finding small ways to make a positive difference for those around us.

Spread cheer: There are fun ways to make a difference in your community. Make a heart to put in the window thanking frontline workers, or a card for a teacher can remind children to appreciate others.

Encourage empathy:

Seek out occasions for empathy (food or clothing drive) and support children to imagine how others feel.



Provide recognition for acts of kindness you notice:

Let your child know that you see them giving a compliment or sharing.

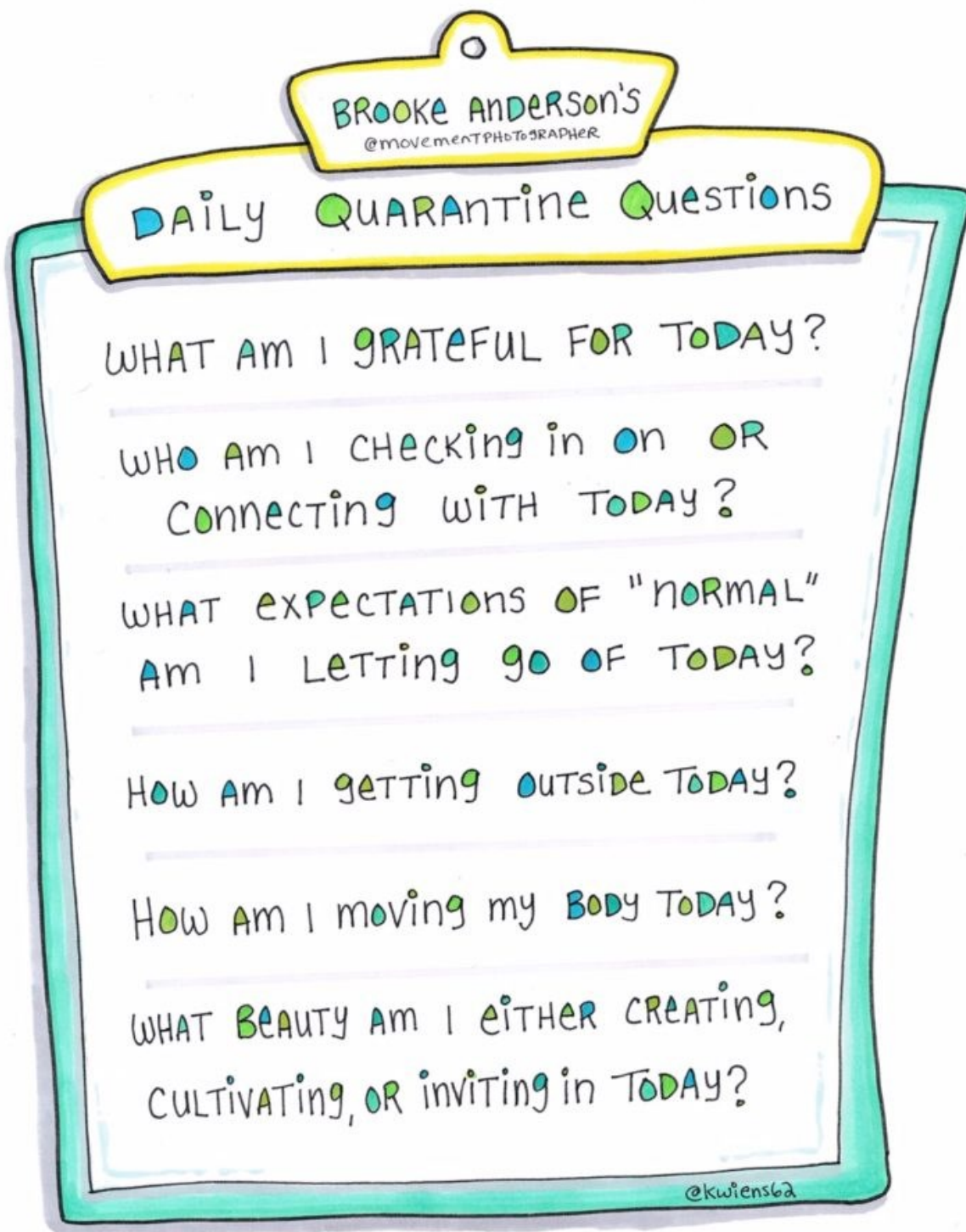
Set an example:

Carrying out generous deeds in your own life; including an elderly relative in your plans or volunteering.

Pick a Charity:

Children may want to be more involved when they help choose a charity for the family to support

Content from: <https://childmind.org/article/tips-for-raising-generous-children/>



Psychosocial Team Program Updates

Ongoing support during COVID-19:

In following the BC Centre for Ability's return to work plan, the Psychosocial team, along with the rest of the Centre, is continuing to provide virtual services via phone, email and video conferencing. Staff will continue to be available during regular business hours and we will continue updating families as we move through the Centre's return to work plan and when in person support is available. We encourage you to continue reaching out to your team member for ongoing support via phone, video and email.



Upcoming Groups & Workshops

Virtual Parent Networking Group

Being offered via Zoom.

Upcoming Dates:

July 29th and August 25th, 2020

Time:

5:00—6:30pm

For More Information or to RSVP:

Contact Margot or Dana



Due to the circumstances some groups and workshops continue to be on hold.

The team will continue to provide updates regarding upcoming groups and workshops when they are safe to resume. If you have further questions, please feel free to contact your Psychosocial team.



Psychosocial Team Staff



Dana Seidel-
Key Worker
Support Services



Margot Merinsky-
Stepping Stones Program



Lena Gilbert-
Family Counselling
Support Services

We want to hear from you!

We are always looking for feedback and welcome your input. If you have any questions, comments or suggestions about any aspect of our Program's services, please call or email us.

Program staff can be reached as follows:

**Lena Gilbert, CYSN Family Counsellor, 778-887-3010 or
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