



Activity Selection

Activities Can Help Your Child

When children feel sad, down, upset, or cranky, they may withdraw from activities that used to make them feel good. They may feel too tired to do the fun things they once enjoyed, or believe that these activities are now pointless or uninteresting. When this happens, they miss out on opportunities to feel better – just when they need these opportunities most! It will help your child prevent getting stuck in bad moods if he or she will deliberately schedule pleasant activities every single day – making sure that these are activities he or she really enjoys.

What Kinds of Activities Will Help?

Here are four simple, inexpensive kinds of activities that can lead to good feelings:

1. **Doing activities that we have enjoyed in the past.** For nearly all of us, there are some activities that are almost guaranteed to make us feel better.
2. **Doing things with someone we like.** Activities we do with a friend can make us feel really good. Even something simple, like talking on the phone or eating lunch together at school, may help a lot.
3. **Staying busy by getting involved with a group or club.** Joining a group or a club can help us stay really busy. We may get so involved and so busy that we don't have time to worry about how we feel. Also, the activities we do with our group or club may be fun, too.
4. **Helping someone else.** Helping another person gets our minds on other people, and that can be good for all of us. Knowing that we are helping someone can also give us a good feeling inside.
5. **Meeting people who are in a similar situation.** It can sometimes help to speak to others who are going through a similar thing. 'Contact' (www.contact.org.uk) is a charity which connects and links families who have a child with the same condition.

How You Can Help

When you see that your son or daughter is feeling bad, or sad, or grouchy, you can help him or her to get involved in new activities. Maybe your son or daughter could call up a friend and plan an activity together with that friend. Or maybe you can help think of a club or group (maybe at school or church/temple) that your child could join to stay really busy. And finally, maybe you can help think of something your son or daughter could do to help another person.

Your child has worked with a therapist to write down ten activities that he or she really likes to do – activities that help him or her feel good. Try posting the list in a prominent place in the house, like on the refrigerator door, so that you will easily have good ideas to suggest to your son or daughter.