

Slow Down

By Shaleek Wilson



Dr. Heather Huszti
CHOC Psychology

Dr. Huszti is a licensed psychologist and has been with CHOC since 2002. She is a member of the American Psychological Association and the Society of Pediatric Psychology. Dr. Huszti served her internship and post-doctorate fellowship at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center.

Dr. Huszti's philosophy of care: "I want to help kids and families function as optimally as possible. I believe that involves working with the whole family."

EDUCATION:

University of California, Irvine (B.A., Psychology)
Texas Tech University (Ph.D., Clinical Psychology)
University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center (internship and fellowship)

61

PERCENT OF KIDS WHO WISH THEY HAD MORE FREE TIME



TIME OUT

"There are a number of studies that suggest kids actually do need some unstructured time," says Dr. Huszti. Kids need moments when they can use their imagination, daydream and even goof off a little bit, she says. And no, this doesn't mean parents should allow kids to play video games all day. Instead, try other unstructured-time activities:

- › Going outside to play
- › Playing a board game

FAMILY BONDING

"Kids need some family time," says Dr. Huszti. "If we find ourselves being overscheduled, we really don't have that time to bond as a family and develop a strong foundation. Look at what's important to your family,

2 HOURS OF UNSTRUCTURED TIME RECOMMENDED PER WEEK

such as dinners or bedtime reading and carve out time for that," she says. Make room for family activities at least once per week. Here are some family-fun ideas:

- › Start a family book club
- › Replace organized team sports with family sports

WRITE IT DOWN

To get a handle on how to balance your child's social and academic calendars, sit down as a family and create a schedule. "If you look at the schedule and realize we're really cutting into homework time, or there's no unstructured or family time, you may be doing too much," says Dr. Huszti. To keep a good pace, have your child pick two activities per week that they really want to do, and you pick two. If something else comes up, take one away.

24 PERCENTAGE OF KIDS WHO SAID THEY FELT TOO BUSY ALL THE TIME

WHAT ELSE CAN YOU DO TO TRIM YOUR CHILD'S SCHEDULE?

Approach the schedule with a "moderation" mentality. If you notice a decline in your child's grades, or an increase in irritability or sickness, try taking them out of some activities and see what happens, says Dr. Huszti.



Experts in: Time Management for Children



October 13

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