


Parent Edition: Summer Holiday Guilt!

As the summer holidays get closer, there is a feeling of relief for many parents, teachers and pupils. The repetitive routines may be starting to feel laborious and everyone is ready for a bit less structure and a bit more freedom. But... for some parents, the summer holidays come with a whole different spectrum of feelings. School may be out for the summer but work often isn't which leads to a juggling act of childcare that can be costly and complicated. Even if parents are able to get time off, filling their children's days can seem almost impossible without spending a small fortune on activities or holidays. It is easy to feel guilty that your child isn't having the same experiences as other children they know. So, how can parents cope with the feelings of pressure and guilt that the summer holidays can bring?

1 *Make memories*

Good times are not expensive times. Making memories is a great goal to have for the summer holidays and we tend to remember things that are different. Try a different park, a different food, take the bus if you normally go in the car, have a carpet picnic, camp in the living room, find a sunset or if you're really brave, a sunrise!

A simple orange sun icon with a semi-circle at the bottom and several rays of varying lengths extending upwards.

2 *Value Boredom*

Being bored is actually good for children. It allows them the space to be curious, creative and find things that they didn't know they liked or disliked. Allow your child to say they're bored without rushing to fix it.

3 *Be honest and upfront*

Children often know more than we think about their care-givers' emotions and so it is usually helpful to be candid about how you're feeling about the long summer ahead. If you are worried about competing pressures, explain this to your children and ask them to prioritise one thing a week that is most important to them. You may also want to give them a budget for these activities for the whole summer and they can be responsible for allocating the money. Be sure to clearly explain the time you have available too and promise this will be quality time with no other distractions.

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