



# Pause for a child



Being busy isn't bad, yet sometimes life can overwhelm you, whether you're an adult or a child.

It's easy in our achievement-oriented culture to want to do it all and be everywhere.

Your son's closest friends may be involved in one or more after school activities and he feels pressured to do the same. Your daughter may be participating in programs or volunteering regularly to beef up her college applications.

Sometimes, you're away from home more than you're there, as you race to meetings or shuttle your children to their designated lessons or practices.

However, if busyness is leading to troubling issues – crankiness, stress, lack of sleep, problems with schoolwork, or even depression – it may be time to slow down.

To create more balance for your family:

- **Organize priorities.** School and good grades should be first on your children's agenda, followed by a level of after school activity they can comfortably manage.
- **Limit** activities to one or two during the school year.
- **Dine together at home** several days a week, instead of eating out.
- **Model the art of saying "No" or "Not Now"** to activities that may not be a good fit, so you and your children will have the energy and time to commit to what you (and they) enjoy most or do best.
- **Schedule a few "do nothing days"** each month so your family can relax and experience spontaneous fun, like riding or playing together in the backyard.

It's okay to fill your family's schedule with worthwhile deeds. During the process, just remember that balance is critical, too.

