



Welcome to our fourth edition of **Bringing School Home**! The Simcoe County District School Board produces this regular e-bulletin to help parents support children on their journey of lifelong learning. We know positive connections between home and school support student achievement. In each Bringing School Home e-bulletin you'll find practical tips and strategies to help your child achieve success in those important years of learning from Kindergarten to Grade 12.

Bringing School Home is available through the Simcoe County District School Board website (www.scdsb.on.ca). As well, parents, guardians and other interested members of our school communities may subscribe through our website and have the bulletin e-mailed directly to their e-mail accounts. (Readers may also unsubscribe at any time.) Please send your comments and feedback to: webadmin@scdsb.on.ca.

Questions of the month: Stimulating Brainwaves and Keeping Your Cool

Stimulating Brainwaves Throughout the Summer

How can I help my children continue to learn throughout the summer?

Learning needn't stop when children leave the classroom, and the summer months can provide countless opportunities for reinforcing skills and exploring new ideas. In our last issue, we offered suggestions for family-friendly outings and day trips. Here are some other ways to stimulate learning:

For younger children:

- Turn everyday activities into learning experiences. For example, children can determine how many place settings are needed for dinner guests and help measure ingredients for a special dish.
- Make a bucket of summer craft supplies and see what your children create. Dollar stores offer many materials and you can find project ideas at your local hardware store or

online.

- Encourage creativity with "dinner theatre." Have your child team up with friends or siblings to create a short play or musical number.
- Explore nature together by tracking the daily weather, researching backyard birds, or planting your own vegetables and flowers.
- Get moving with summer-themed physical activity - fly kites, walk around your neighbourhood, ride your bike, go swimming, etc.

For older children:

- Teenagers can also benefit from "everyday learning." Ask them to map out directions for a road trip or help balance the weekly household budget, for example.
- Keep reading and writing skills sharp by encouraging your teens to start a summer reading club or write letters to out-of-town family and friends.
- If your teens enjoy woodworking and building activities, help them pick up supplies for their own woodworking project (building a CD rack or birdfeeder are just two options). Home improvement projects such as painting and landscaping will also reinforce math and other skills.
- Consider giving the gift of music, acting, or drawing lessons if your teen is artistically inclined.
- Your teen's time at home provides the ultimate opportunity to teach home economics - ask your teen to plan and cook one meal a week, or to take on a small sewing project.

Keeping your Cool

I love having my kids home over the summer, but I have a hard time dealing with their arguments and tantrums. Any suggestions for keeping my cool?

Raising children has both joyful and challenging moments. Here are a few suggestions to help discourage challenging behaviour:

- Set clear expectations. Ward off potential conflicts by ensuring that all family members know what is expected of them up front. For example, if you expect your teenager to fill the gas tank after using the car, ensure you discuss this before the car leaves the driveway.
- Stick to routines, even during the summer months. Children benefit from structure all year round and learn discipline and time management skills in the process.
- Avoid boredom. Sometimes sibling quarrels arise simply because children need something to do. Try to ensure that each of your children has several fun, interesting ways to pass the time during their days at home.
- Spend quality time. You probably can't rearrange your schedule to spend every minute with your children, but they may assume that you are also "free" during the summer and act out when they find this isn't the case. Schedule small blocks of time just for them

throughout the week to demonstrate that they're still a priority.

If you do find yourself dealing with a full-blown argument or tantrum, experts recommend staying calm and taking a quiet "time out" if need be. It helps to remember that every parent has been through similar situations - and that this, too, shall pass.

This month's featured web pages

We invite you to visit www.scdsb.on.ca often for news, facts, school information, Board highlights and hundreds of other pages about Simcoe County's public education system. This month we are featuring our Student Street web pages -

<http://www.scdsb.on.ca/students/index.cfm>.

Our Internet surfing this month leads to the "Tips for Summer Learning Fun" page of the Ontario Ministry of Education website: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/seasonal/>

Next Issue

The next issue of *Bringing School Home* will feature 'Back to School Notes' and 'Smooth Transitions.'

Quote of the month

"All the world is a laboratory to the inquiring mind." ~*Martin H. Fischer, (1879-1962), German-born physician and author.*

The Simcoe County District School Board is deeply committed to ensuring all learners have the opportunity to realize their dreams within a vibrant and successful public education system. We are very proud of our 57,000 students who are learning and achieving in our 108 schools and six adult learning centres throughout our urban and rural communities. Working with school communities, our dedicated and skilled staff members provide quality programs to help students develop lifelong learning skills in safe, caring environments. Our schools are located in the Huronia and Georgian Bay regions of south-central Ontario.

For more information visit our web site at www.scdsb.on.ca



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