

It's OK for your child to be bored. In fact, it's recommended!

This Free E-Book is brought to you by [Natural-Aging.com](http://Natural-Aging.com).

**100% Effective Natural Hormone Treatment**  
**Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances**  
**Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!**

**It's OK for your child to be bored. In fact, it's recommended!**

**By Alan M. Hess**

**It's OK for your child to be bored. In fact, it's recommended!**

by: **Alan M. Hess**

NY — Strange as it may sound, boredom promotes happier, creative kids who are better problem solvers. When children use their own creativity with unstructured play, they find ways to amuse themselves — even if it means simply daydreaming.

That's the advice of child development expert, Alan M. Hess who wants to see American children spend more time in unstructured play, less time in structured activities and much less time in front of mindless TV programs. Hess states, "Plain and simple, it's called creative child development. I recognize that in our society, it's a hard concept for people to grasp at first.

"Many American parents who work 60 to 70 hours a week impose a very structured lifestyle on their children. They're concerned about boredom, so they overschedule to keep kids busy. Believe it or not, there is a direct relationship between boredom and creative thought."

Alan Hess, president of Safari Ltd., with its line of museum quality creative toys, is a noted authority and respected expert in developing creative play for children. Hess states, "Think back to when you were a kid and you will recall valuable lessons. Left to our own devices we discovered resources we didn't know we had. I'm concerned that our busy, well-entertained children may not ever have the chance to learn them."

Hess, states, "Although most of the products that I've been involved with are designed for children four and up, especially our current Safari line of products, I constantly study toddler trends. Several pediatric physicians, who are part of our research team, have shared some disturbing trends with me regarding middle and upper class parents who push their children to the extremes in the hopes that this will provide a better foundation for the child's future.

"They've told me about situations where parents are determined to find the "perfect three year old" pre-school so that their daughter will be prepared for law school later in life. Other parents make their

It's OK for your child to be bored. In fact, it's recommended!

children compete in soccer matches and karate competition when the child is recovering from the flu. Their misguided reasoning is that the child needs to learn what competition means, regardless of illness, or circumstances. This thinking is insane."

Hess firmly believes that children need time to be children. Creativity, social skills and fun are vital to a well-rounded child. He suggests that parents help children get the most out of unstructured play by limiting TV. Parents might also provide materials, creative toys and even gentle suggestions, if necessary. Parental guidance and parental participation is also important. Hess said, "Bored kids eventually take out the paints, build a dinosaur den, read a book ... and create things, or they come home sweaty from a game of neighborhood soccer. Our educational, nature and science toys with a special focus on scale-model animal and dinosaur replicas are big favorites with children. They love the fantasy play and the fun of creating their own world."

This concept of boredom is new territory at the beginning because children may be upset that they

can't watch TV. They may also bicker with their siblings. Hess states, "Working or single parent households may have even more of a challenge, but he strongly encourages parents not to give in and flip on the TV, or let kids watch a video."

The lifelong benefits of unstructured play are so great that Hess urges parents to try to find an hour a week for it. And he offers these tips to make things easier:

**Set Limits to TV and Video Play.** There is something very wrong with the fact that many children watch an average of 38 hours per week. Cutting back can provide unstructured play time. Most parents and care takers passively allow the media to routinely expose kids to violence and sex when they would never let an individual, or educational institution expose their children to this type of content.

Far too many children spend hours each day at computers, playing with hand-held game devices, or watching videos. Hess suggests that parents set a firm daily limit to these activities. Hess says, "The value of a toy is simple to calculate...to what degree does the toy invite imagination and creativity? After a week, if you find that your child is more interested in playing with the toy box instead of the toy, you've wasted money and time."

Unstructured play time doesn't require a huge investment in new toys. Hess cites one focus group study where two boys were playing with toys. One girl had an electronically enhanced dinosaur and she boasted: "My dinosaur can say 500 words!" The other boy, who was holding a Safari dinosaur countered with: "My dino can say anything I want it to say and it looks like a real dino."

Hess states, "We hear so much about hyperactive children who are medicated as a result of this behavior. Is the child really hyperactive, or does the child simply need more unstructured play time? Children are free spirits and when that's denied, we see physical and mental manifestations that have a negative impact on a healthy childhood.

"Spend time watching your child play. This can show children that adults value their play," Hess says. It's not necessary to join in, although that's great fun too, as long as parents don't try to take over. In

It's OK for your child to be bored. In fact, it's recommended!

fact, one highly successful parenting strategy involves spending time each day with your child doing whatever he or she chooses to do."

During this "special time," the child makes the decisions, controls the flow of the play and assigns all roles. It's unstructured play time for your child, yet you get to participate. It's important for us to share time with children and it shows them that you value their play.

Hess encourages parents to give this boredom concept a serious try. He states, "Giving your children a break from organized activities and electronic baby-sitters could very well mean sentencing them to boredom, at least at first, but it will open up a whole new world of creativity, fun and adventure as it helps them expand their minds."

Alan Hess, president of Safari Ltd., has an extensive marketing background with a wide array of highly successful toy and hobby products. One of the key factors in his success is his understanding of child development research and his ability to apply that knowledge to product development.

## **The "B" Word**

**By Jacquie McTaggart**

Former students would probably attest to the fact that few things tried my patience as much as did the statement, "This is boring!" As I reflect back on my many years in the classroom, I can't help but feel a tad bit sorry for the first kid who made the mistake of uttering those words each year. (It was rare to hear the phrase a second time because most kids vividly recalled my "sermon," and they didn't want to risk a repeat performance.)

The sermon went something like this. "Nobody is BORED in my classroom. I work hard to plan fun and interesting activities that will allow you to learn. When you finish your work earlier than others, there are many choices of quiet things to do. You may use the book nook, puppet theatre, computer, writing center, art center, or the manipulative math corner. Now please, do NOT let me hear the word "bored" again!"

I suspect that each school year's first offender felt like Calvin in one of my favorite Calvin and Hobbes cartoons. In the first two frames Calvin is sitting at his school desk looking totally bored, but saying nothing. In the third frame Calvin screams, "BORRRING!" In the final frame Calvin is heading for the Principal's office muttering, "Yeah, yeah...kill the messenger."

Although not many kids made the mistake of verbally uttering the "B" word a second time, I suspect they thought it (or mouthed it to their friends) more than once. Why do all teachers - and many parents - hear this complaint on a somewhat regular basis? Is it because most kids find the day-to-day classroom work too easy? Not hardly.

Contrary to popular opinion, the "bored" child is not always the academically gifted child who is not

It's OK for your child to be bored. In fact, it's recommended!

being challenged. As a matter of fact, that is rarely the case. More often than not, the "bored" student is one who is frustrated because he is not really understanding the material being presented, or does not yet possess the skill that he is being asked to demonstrate. (None of us like to admit that we aren't up to doing a task that we're expected to accomplish, or that we haven't the foggiest notion about what is being explained to us. And for most of us, it's easier to say, "I'm bored" than it is to say, "I'm struggling.")

When a student of any age – that includes the high school kid – says he is bored, he oftentimes means something quite different. He is really saying, "This isn't fun. This is work and I don't want to work. I want to be entertained! Furthermore, I don't understand what she (the teacher) is talking about or what I am supposed to do. " In the mind of the student (albeit subconsciously), his cry of boredom shifts the blame and the responsibility from himself to the teacher.

If the child is unlucky, the "boredom syndrome" will give the parent a hook on which to hang criticism of the teacher, and no one will win. The parent blames the teacher, the teacher reacts defensively, and the child continues to flounder. An opportunity for helping a kid gets lost somewhere between the pointing fingers of the parent and the defense mechanisms of the teacher.

And what do I suggest you do if your child says, "School is boring"? Run (forget walk) to the telephone and request a conference with your child's teacher. Advise the teacher of your concern. Assure "him" that you are not requesting a conference to assign blame to anyone, but rather to get his opinion as to what is really going on in the classroom that might prompt a declaration of boredom. I can assure you that your child's teacher will appreciate your concern and do everything possible to work with you to determine the cause, and work toward a solution.

"Boredom, after all, is a form of criticism."  
–William Phillips

\*This article is an excerpt from Chapter 8 in my book, *From the Teacher's Desk*.

Jacquie McTaggart is a recently retired 42-year career teacher and author of, "From the Teacher's Desk." She currently travels throughout the country speaking at teacher and parent conventions. You can find more of her teaching and parenting tips at

Related Content:

The "B" Word  
10 Positive Discipline techniques for children  
Child Car Seats  
Toys For Rabbits  
Child Safety Tips

It's OK for your child to be bored. In fact, it's recommended!

Read more Content at

Related Products:

Baby's First Year –What Parent Needs To Know

Help Your Child Succeed In School

HIV/Aids Healed by the Power of God

How to become a Chef!

Understanding Acne: Causes, Cures and Myths

: A genuine resource center for Quality Ebooks and Softwares



This Free E–Book has been brought to you by [Natural–Aging.com](http://Natural–Aging.com).

**[100% Effective Natural Hormone Treatment](#)**  
**Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances**  
**Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!**