

Activity Scheduling

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Activity Scheduling may help children who have depression or behavior problems. It teaches a child that fun activities help them feel good. When a child keeps busy he or she has less time to think or feel bad. Having less free time can help a child stay out of trouble. The therapist may have a child write down how he or she feels before and after an activity. By keeping track of their feelings, a child will see that doing fun activities helps him or her feel good.

How does this practice work?

- Brainstorm about activities he or she likes to do with the therapist.
- Keep activities simple, free, and close to home.
- Keep activities fun and ones that make a child feel good.
- Include other children or adults whenever possible.
- Choose activities that allow a child to succeed.

The child puts a plan into action that increases their activity level. Here are a few examples:

Joe's Summer Routine

1. Make bed
2. Eat breakfast
3. Do chores
4. Play catch with Josh
5. Eat lunch
6. Ride bike with Tom
7. Come home for dinner
8. Play a board game

Nancy's List of Fun Things to Do

1. Visit Grandpa & Grandma
2. Go Camping
3. Play volleyball
4. Play with dog "Charlie"
5. Watch a movie
6. Go shopping with mom
7. Ride bike with girlfriends
8. Rollerblading
9. Have a slumber party

Example:

Nancy is 11 years old and has started seeing a therapist because she is living with depression. Nancy tells the therapist that she doesn't do anything fun. The therapist recommends that Nancy start doing "fun" activities because they will help improve her mood. Nancy makes a list of things she thinks are fun. The therapist and Nancy agree that she will do one of the fun activities on her list before her next therapy session. She decides to visit her grandpa and grandma. Before her visit Nancy writes in her notebook how she is feeling - sad and low energy. Nancy noticed after going to the park with her grandparents she was feeling happy and had more energy. She reports this to the therapist during her next visit.

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