



FROM YOUR CFS **Wellness Specialist**



Why Children Need “Downtime”

As families settle back into school routines, opportunities abound—sports, music, clubs, and more. These activities can be wonderful, but even good things can overwhelm if we are not intentional. Children (and parents!) need time to rest. God created rhythms of work and rest, and when our calendars overflow, downtime is often the first thing to go.

What is downtime?

Downtime is unstructured time, free from scheduled activities, when children choose what they enjoy. It may look like reading, daydreaming, building a fort, or simply being still. For older children and teens, downtime also provides space to process the day and connect authentically with parents. Many meaningful conversations happen in those unhurried moments.

Why it matters

Unstructured time fuels imagination and creativity. It helps children learn independence and problem-solving. Most importantly, it offers an opportunity to pause and notice God's blessings instead of racing through life. Jesus Himself withdrew to quiet places to pray (Luke 5:16). If He needed rest, how much more do we?

Tips for encouraging downtime

- 1. Pay attention to each child's needs.** Irritability, fatigue, or loss of interest may signal an overscheduled child.
- 2. Welcome boredom.** Instead of rushing to entertain, encourage creativity: “I know you'll think of something fun!”
- 3. Protect rest days.** Intentionally block time with no commitments. A “do nothing” day can restore the whole family.
- 4. Model balance.** Show children that adults also pause, rest, and focus on God's goodness.

God invites us to rest in Him: “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28). Helping children find balance between activity and rest not only benefits them now but also nurtures lifelong rhythms of renewal in Christ.
