



**Canadian Mental
Health Association**
Champlain East
Mental health for all

**Association canadienne
pour la santé mentale**
Champlain Est
La santé mentale pour tous

329 rue Pitt Street
Cornwall, ON K6J 3R1
Tel 613-933-5845
1-800-493-8271
Fax 613-936-2323
cmha-east.on.ca
acsm-est.on.ca

Submitted by: Canadian Mental Health Association Champlain East

The importance of play

Summer has finally arrived and it is a season for many people to enjoy some vacation time and spend time with friends and family. Summer months can be a great opportunity to relax and recharge but also to bring more fun into life. As adults, we sometimes tend to forget how being playful is not only reserved for children. Adults need to have fun as well. This article provides information on the benefits of being playful and ways to incorporate more fun into our life.

It has been proven that play is important for children's development. However, research shows that play is critical for adults' well-being too. Unfortunately, many adults do not spend enough time for play. Adults can play in many ways and research is abundantly clear on the fact that playing brings mental and physical well-being benefits.

What are the benefits of playing and having fun?

- A 2011 study concluded that playfulness significantly contributed to overall well-being.
- A 2013 study found that playful adults reported having lower stress levels. Play was also a way to help them use healthier coping strategies like acceptance and positive reframing.
- Adults who play more may be physically healthier as they have a more active way of life. For example, when adults find physical exercises that feel like play for them, they are more likely to engage in them.

What are some strategies to incorporate more play into our lives?

First, play and fun can differ from one person to another. As Gretchen Rubin, the author of the book *The Happiness Project* says: "You have to be honest about what's actually fun for you. It's a Secret of Adulthood: just because something is fun for someone else doesn't mean it's fun for you, and vice versa." Thus, the whole idea is to find what activities are fun for you.

- Find activities that energizes you and do not feel like a chore.
- As Gretchen Rubin advises, try experimenting something new without focusing on being productive. Allow yourself to take some risks and finding the joy of experimentation and exploration.



**Canadian Mental
Health Association**
Champlain East
Mental health for all

**Association canadienne
pour la santé mentale**
Champlain Est
La santé mentale pour tous

329 rue Pitt Street
Cornwall, ON K6J 3R1
Tel 613-933-5845
1-800-493-8271
Fax 613-936-2323
cmha-east.on.ca
acsm-est.on.ca

- Try approaching daily tasks or moments with curiosity, humor, and openness.
- Prioritize and schedule play into your daily routine by incorporating activities you enjoy doing or feel more inclined to do.

Finally, here some examples of activities, which can be wonderful opportunities to have fun with your kids or grand kids as well during this summer:

- Spending time in nature: going on picnics in a park (involving the kids in preparing the food), bird watching, going on a camping trip, fishing, hiking trips in the woods, horseback riding and more.
- Attending various events in your area: music concerts, farmers markets, county fairs, art expositions, cultural events, etc. These are great opportunities to discover new artists, local businesses and enjoy new fun experiences.
- Trying a new board game: some libraries have a large collection of board games you can borrow or try on site.

Planning and practicing various, playful activities for you and with your kids can create meaningful experiences and memories that will be cherished for many years. Have fun this summer!

Sources:

<https://psychcentral.com/blog/the-importance-of-play-for-adults>

<https://gretchenrubin.com/articles/your-happiness-project-have-more-fun/>

<https://nifplay.org/play-note/adult-play/>

DO YOU NEED HELP?

Dial or text 2-1-1 for free and confidential service that easily connects people to the critical social and community supports they need.

If you are thinking of suicide, please call 9-8-8 which is a mental health crisis and suicide prevention line.



**Canadian Mental
Health Association**
Champlain East
Mental health for all

**Association canadienne
pour la santé mentale**
Champlain Est
La santé mentale pour tous

329 rue Pitt Street
Cornwall, ON K6J 3R1
Tel 613-933-5845
1-800-493-8271
Fax 613-936-2323
cmha-east.on.ca
acsm-est.on.ca

The information provided is not a substitute for professional advice. If you need advice, please consult a qualified health care professional. For further information or if you want to access our services at CMHA, please call 1-800-493-8271 or visit our web site at www.cmha-east.on.ca