




# **What Will You Do When Your Child Says They're Bored?**



You might find it incredible that your child could be bored, considering the amount of activities and electronic devices that they have available. On the other hand, it may be that abundance itself that is causing their discontent.

That's because many children today are used to being passively entertained and having their days scheduled for them. With so much screen time, French lessons, and math camps, **they have little experience with figuring out how to engage themselves when they do have a little free time.**

As a parent, you might be tempted to try to fix things for them, but that can backfire because they won't learn how to manage their time themselves. Instead, try these tips for what to do when your child says they're bored.

## **Give Your Child More Attention:**

Sometimes complaints about boredom are actually a sign that your child needs more of your attention. If you've been distracted by other responsibilities, use this as your time to reconnect.

2



## Try these strategies to give your child more attention, even when you're busy:

1. **Demonstrate affection.** Physical touch has powerful effects and can even cause positive changes in the brain.

Hug your child regularly.

2. **Listen closely.** Let your child know you're interested in what they have to say. Take a walk together and give them your full attention. Ask relevant questions and share your own experiences.

3. **Create family rituals.** Schedule family dinners at least once a week where you can focus on conversation and healthy eating. For smaller children, make bedtime fun by reading stories and singing songs.

4. **Talk with the teacher.** Find out if they're bored at school too. **Discuss the situation with your child to find out what's going on.** They could be ahead of their class or struggling to keep up.




## Help Your Child Entertain Themselves:

Most of the time, a child who is bored just needs to learn to act independently. While their development will depend on their own efforts, you can provide loving guidance and support.

### Try these ideas:

1. **Pause first.** Give your child a chance to come up with their own solutions to boredom. If they're still stumped after about 15 minutes, you can lend a hand.
2. **Brainstorm together.** Come up with a list of ideas and activities that match your child's interests. Include some things that they will enjoy doing alone.
3. **Assist with logistics.** While your child takes the lead with figuring out how to become more engaged, there is still plenty for you to do. Explain how to find helpful resources, teach them how to organize their thoughts, and be their chauffeur if they need a ride.



4. **Ask for help.** One of the most effective ways to gain your child's cooperation is to let them know you need their help. Invite them to join you in preparing dinner or tending the garden.

5. **Encourage reading.** A child who appreciates reading outside of school will rarely be bored. Visit your local library and keep lots of reading materials around your house. Start a neighborhood book club with other children and parents.

6. **Rest and relax.** It's easy to feel pressured to always be doing something. Show your child the value in taking time to refresh and restore. **Practice meditation together.** Listen to music without doing anything else at the same time. You'll be training your child to become more mindful and less vulnerable to boredom.

Unstructured time is your child's opportunity to engage their creativity and learn important time management and organizational skills. If you can empathize with their boredom and point them in a positive direction, you'll be helping them to grow up to be a happy and productive adult.