

Parenting during the pandemic

Hello, I would like to introduce myself to you, if you do not know who I am. My name is Kelly Schmaltz and I am the Family School Liaison Counsellor at Calgary Christian School. I have been working with Calgary Christian since 2015. To start off I want you to know I love my job. To be able to work in a school surrounded by kids and teenagers, is my dream job. I feel God's calling on my life to help increase communication and encourage change and growth. Everyone knows that work, even though enjoyable, does take a person's energy. Then after work we head home and with that sense of loss of choice in our everyday life, the news not always being positive, and cancellation of most of the things we have grown to enjoy, we get home and PARENT.

As a person I feel a sense of loss, like, I have lost part of who I saw myself to be. Our life has changed over the past year in ways that we would have never imagined. Gyms have closed, sports classes have been stopped, face to face family gatherings have not been possible, we are asked to work from home, and we have been told not to allow others into our homes. We have simply lost the freedom to choose our comings and goings. After a year of feeling restricted I find myself in a "funk."

At first, at our house, we had our routines and schedules and now I feel screen time has the tendency to take over many routines. When I get home, my kids are already there, in their space on a device playing online games with friends. It begins...the parents' choice... let them play (take away the one activity they feel they have)...demand chores ...or just do them yourself....That seems to be the choice as a parent.

To give a little background on myself, I have a husband who is my team member and together we can uphold a schedule. A routine where flexibility is encouraged/demanded. This unpredictability we live with these days has taught us that flexibility is needed and that disappointments come and go, and no matter how much I want my child to choose to stop wanting to play video games, I understand that is not likely.

As humans we need that human interaction with peers and family. As a parent it is hard to be the judge, seemingly causing many disappointments, AKA less screen time. Sigh. Or is it me that is alone in my thoughts? I feel like we, as parents, are the "badminton racket" and the children are the "birdie", needing constant encouragement and ideas to keep them up or "not bored".

Pastor Layne and I would like to invite CCS Secondary Parents to have a conversation or maybe better put, "a parenting brainstorming session". I would like to get some fresh ideas about what you are doing with your kids to keep them engaged. To be able to laugh at some failures and take away some new ideas. For example, in my house my 12 year old boy is NOT a fan of 1000 piece puzzles but the wood burning kit we bought for him was a success.

Wednesday February 24th at 7:30-8:30 pm We would like to invite you to a zoom parenting brainstorming session. Come and give input or just come and listen. During the meeting there will be opportunities to type ideas or questions in the comment section. We look forward to seeing you there!

Pastor Layne: layne.kilbreath@pallisersd.ab.ca

Kelly Schmaltz: kelly.schmaltz@pallisersd.ab.ca

Zoom Info:

<https://zoom.us/j/92366846656?pwd=a29KS3hMemN3OEJyWTVDNTJhaTI4dz09>