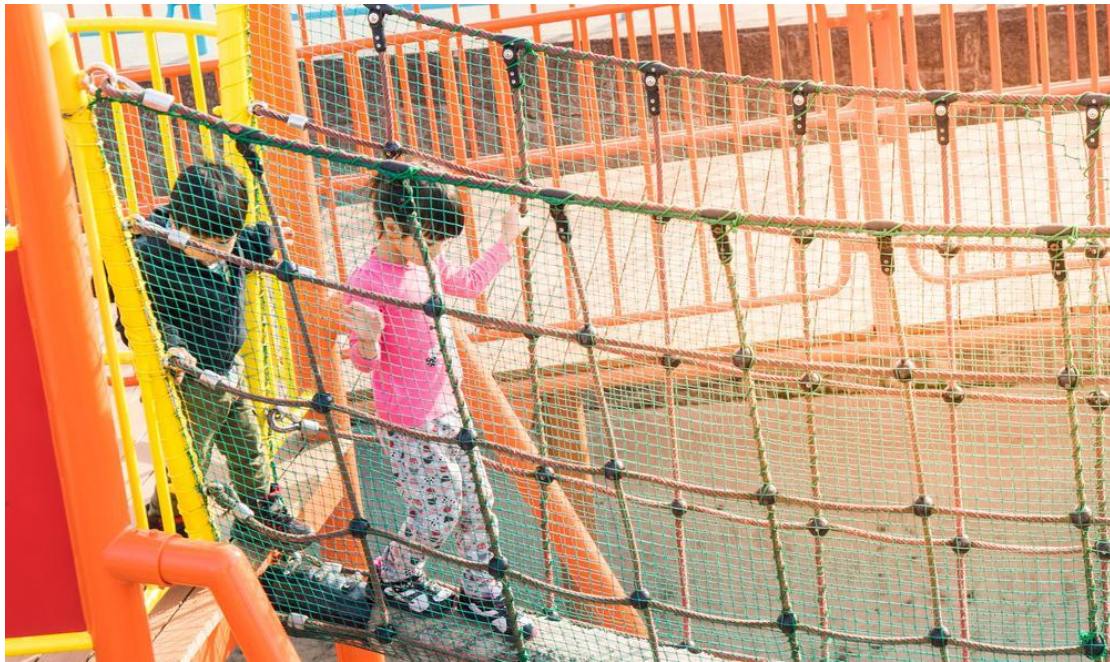


## Blank Days During the Summer Vacation



Written by: Lam Ho Pui Yee, Founder & Volunteer Director of Good Love Passion

Many parents make great efforts to fill their children's summer vacations with activities, as in the parents' eyes, if the summer time is not spent on learning, it will be wasted. Attending tutorial classes, hobby classes, and summer camps, or even going abroad for study tours, have become the norm. But what would a summer without any extra classes or talent training be like? Can parents give their children a true summer vacation?

Who says that giving children a summer vacation without extra classes and crammed schedules means they lose learning opportunities? Alvin Rosenfeld, the author of "The Over-Scheduled Child" and an American scholar, has pointed out that reserving enough blank time for children actually allows them the space and opportunity to find and develop their personal interests. Many groundbreaking theories were also born during periods of unstructured time. For example, after graduating from university, Einstein was unemployed and had to work at the patent office cataloging strange inventions. He used this blank time to ponder constantly, and eventually discovered the revolutionary concept of relativity. Similarly, during the great plague outbreak in London, Newton had an entire year to retreat to the countryside and lie on the lawn, thinking freely without distractions. It was then that he observed an apple falling from a tree - something he likely would have missed had he remained in the bustling city of London.



Therefore, by leaving blank days during the summer vacation, a child's mode of thinking will be more prominent, whereas when the schedule is packed full, even the best minds will be in vain. Please leave some time for your children, allow them to allocate their own time, encourage them to engage in lengthy blank periods and slow contemplation of life experiences, and even permit them to waste some time doing silly things. Within these two months, they should say "I love you" to two family members at least 30 times, hug those two family members once a day for three consecutive days, refrain from using their smartphones for a day, and attend a music concert or watch a sports game. Let them walk to the beach or grassy areas to play, run, and shout to their heart's content, take the initiative to care for those who need care, such as visiting elderly neighbors living alone, and writing an encouraging letter to an old classmate or elderly family member.

Let's allow our children to experience different lifestyles and have a fulfilling yet unhurried summer vacation!