

From Your Ridgecrest Counselors

We are excitedly approaching Winter Break in a short couple of weeks. This is a time for families to spend together. Some of you may be traveling for the holidays and some may be relaxing around home. In either fashion, we are providing you with some ideas and recommendations on how to make the most out of Winter Break with your student(s).

Electronics

- Though your child may be going to bed later, electronics should be off and in your bedroom at night for charging.
- Electronics should not appear during mealtimes.
- Encourage your child to read a book over the break to keep their mind active. Don't let electronics take the place of other activities.
- Help your child discover a new hobby so they are not dependent on electronics for their sole means of entertainment.
- Promote a technology-free day for your family. Make a plan to be active and out of the house that day.

Communication

- Prepare and cook a meal together. Do this by planning a family trip to the market and including everyone's favorite meal item.
- Ask your child(ren) what they would like to do for the day as a family.
- Organize a game night. This can be done as a family or by inviting some family friends over and making it a party.
- Work together on a project such as cleaning out a closet and finding old clothes or toys to donate. This gives you time together to talk.
- Use the holiday time when family is together to talk to older family members about the family tree.
- Get to know your teen while he or she is not under the stress of school. This may prove to be time well spent. For tips on this, take a minute to read the article, *9 Tips for Communicating with Teens*, by Dr. Greg Allen: http://redondobeach.patch.com/groups/opinion/p/9-tips-for-communicating-with-teens_e9456206

Making Plans

- Take an adventure together: California Science Center, California Cabrillo Marine Aquarium, Beach Day, Griffith Observatory, Venice Beach, Hiking (PV Hills, Runyon Canyon, Temescal Canyon, etc.), Getty Center and Getty Villa, LACMA, MOCA, La Brea Tar Pits, Farmers Markets, Bike Riding at the beach, Road trips to the mountains. What other ideas do you have that your family would enjoy?

Friends

- Students need to see their friends during winter break or be in contact with their friends. While we strongly encourage time spent with family members, time spent with friends is also needed. Encourage your child(ren) to make plans with their friends or invite friends to join you for an activity once in a while during the winter vacation.

We wish you and your families a wonderful and safe Winter Break. Happy Holidays!

Heidi Shulman & Jesse Allen