

For immediate release

20 May 20, 2010

SA families missing benefits of quality time

South Australian children are missing “caring and sharing” time with their parents – and it’s the parents themselves who are saying this.

A Uniting Church SA survey has revealed that only 32 per cent of South Australians believe that parents spend enough quality time with their children.

More than half (57 per cent) of those who responded to the survey – commissioned as part of the Church’s Uniting People campaign and conducted as part of the April 2010 McGregor Tan Household Omnibus Survey – said they believed both parents and children were disadvantaged by the absence of relaxed “together time”.

Rev. Rod Dyson, Moderator of Uniting Church SA, says the results led the Church to produce a free booklet, *100 Ways to Spend Quality Time With Your Kids*.

The full-colour booklet is full of fun and light-hearted suggestions about ways parents and children can spend “quality time” with each other without spending a lot of money. Ideas include “roughing it” in the backyard or in an indoor cubby, planning and preparing a dinner party for friends, volunteering for a charity and making a pinboard for precious photos and memorabilia.

“The survey shows that a lot of people are aware that they and their children miss out by not spending enough time together,” Rev. Dyson says.

“We believe it is very important for family members to take some time from their hectic lives, slow down and enjoy their families.

“Most people have so much going on, it sometimes can take a conscious effort to plan ‘down time’. Our booklet gives 100 ideas of activities that can be fun for parents and children – some of which can be done without any planning at all, and others that can be achieved with little more than sunshine and a bus ticket.”

The main reasons people gave for the lack of quality time were:

- Hectic lifestyles / too busy / time poor (17 per cent)
- Working too much / long hours / work pressures (17 per cent)
- Both parents working / mums are now working (8 per cent)
- Children spending too much time using technology and computers (6 per cent)
- Too many distractions for children and parents (6 per cent)

- Children wanting independence earlier – don't want parents around (5 per cent)

Rev. Dyson says it is pleasing that more employers are introducing “work-life balance” policies, but that more can be done to promote the importance of families.

“We all benefit from happy, content family lives, and employers and the community need to emphasise how crucial this is,” he says.

Rev. Dyson says the Church has also produced a television commercial – about to be broadcast for the first time - that “promotes the benefits of listening and hearing people important to us”.

“The commercial is part of our campaign emphasizing the importance of community – and that a community is really a group of individuals who take the time to listen to and help each other,” Rev. Dyson says.

“In both the booklet and the commercial, we are asking people to take the time to treasure the moment and care for the people close to us.”

[100 Ways to Spend Quality Time With Your Kids can be downloaded at unitingpeople.org.au](http://unitingpeople.org.au)