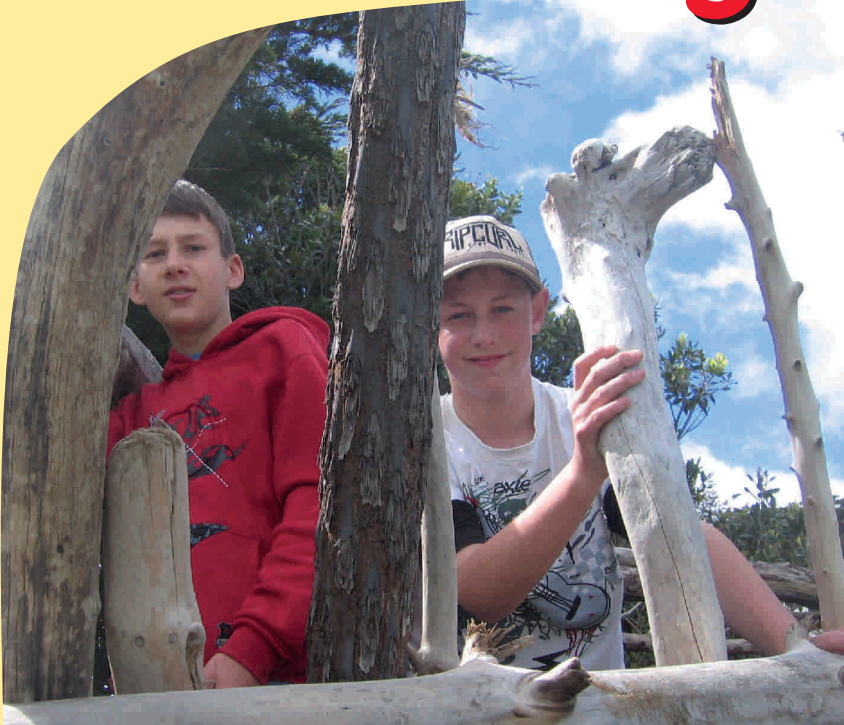




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Electra

Caring for Our Community



Turn off the Game Boy and computers and encourage children to build a fort (like Cameron and Zach here), explore new mountain bike tracks, read, play with friends, create an art table for creative activities, dress up, be a tourist in your own area, have a picnic in your own back yard and spend five minutes a day thinking of others.



Reuben (right) likes the trampoline because "it's bouncy and I can see over the fence." His brother Josh would rather ride on his BMX than play on the computer because "on my bike I can ride really fast and win trophies".

Parents don't know how to deal with the problems computers and Game Boy, Xbox and Playstation's are creating for their kids.

Screen Addicted Kids

Recent research shows that too much screen time decreases kids level of human engagement and the 'smarts' that comes from that. It can also encourage antisocial and depressive behaviour. How do we make sure they stay active and caring.

Adrian Parkyn from Team Up says "it takes a bit of planning" but believes it's worth it to make healthier, happier kids. For more alternatives to screen time talk to your children and other concerned parents/care givers, visit www.teamup.co.nz, www.tv-turnoff.org or www.sparc.org.nz.

Dean shows Jazmine and Laura how to make art sculpture made from materials found at the beach. Martin Whyte, a local parent and teacher says parents need to be leaders in getting kids off the screen. "Every parent is tempted to 'park' their child in front of a screen. It's cheap, easy, no-sweat babysitting, but it's addictive. The most important thing a parent can exercise is boundaries with back-up and consistency," says Martin.



Building? Up your insulation!



Changes are afoot to increase the thermal performance of new houses in New Zealand. This will likely mean mandatory increased insulation levels in the not too distant future. Spending on insulation is a great investment. If you want a house that is more comfortable to live in, costs much less to heat and has health benefits as well – then look to increase your insulation levels above current New Zealand Standards. Don't wait! If you are building now, ask your builder about extra insulation in the roof and under the floor. And don't forget double-glazing! Insist upon it. You will be glad you did. The extra cost of these things will add \$4000-6000 to the average house, but it is an investment for the future – energy costs are not going to get cheaper and your resale value will be enhanced.

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