



# STOP THE SUMMER SLIDE:

## TIPS TO SHARE WITH FAMILIES

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Summer slide is the loss of academic skills and knowledge over the course of the break from school. Research has shown that children can lose one to two months of math and reading skills during the summer. As parents and families, there are many ways you can support the continuation of your child's learning all summer—and create opportunities that remind your child learning can be fun and happen anywhere.

**These tips offer inspiration and ideas to keep your child's mind engaged, while boosting his or her learning throughout the summer.**

### READ EVERY DAY

Reading every day, either with an adult or independently, is essential for your child to continue sharpening reading skills. Create a summer reading list and plan with your child, based on his or her interests. Summer is a great time to mix things up and try different types of reading materials, such as graphic novels, periodicals or poetry. Utilize your local library—not only for reading materials, but also for the summer reading programs they have available for children.

### MATH IN EVERYDAY EXPERIENCES

Opportunities for children to stretch their math skills present themselves throughout daily activities. Invite your child to calculate your arrival time to various destinations, practice fractions while prepping meals, or compare prices during a trip to the grocery store. Provide your child with measurement tools and a list of objects to measure, or have him or her survey family members about their favorites and graph the results. Board games, dice games, card games, dominoes and puzzles are also great tools for reinforcing math skills.

### FIT AND ACTIVE

Many children experience weight gain during the summer months. Maintain healthy eating habits and structured eating patterns to keep your child's nutrition on track. Encourage your child to be physically active with fun and interesting activities. Invite him or her to turn up the music and have a dance party, use objects found in your home to create an obstacle course, or jump rope while reciting jump rope rhymes or counting by 5s, 10s, 3s or 6s. Take walks around your neighborhood, visit your local parks, or have your child try a new sport at your local recreation center.

### EXPLORING SCIENCE

Summer is a great time to take advantage of the science learning nature has to offer. Invite your child to observe clouds and learn about the different types and how they are formed. Encourage your child to explore your outdoor area for insects, then document and research his or her findings. Plant vegetables or flowers and record the changes in their growth, or learn about volume while playing water tag.

## CREATIVE ENDEAVORS

Keep your child's creative juices flowing this summer with art, construction or drama projects. Invite your child to practice telling stories by a "campfire," to re-enact your favorite family movie or to create new lyrics to your favorite song. Allow for open-ended creative expression by providing art and craft materials or various construction materials and letting your child unleash his or her imagination.

## FAMILY PROJECTS

Family projects are a great way to work together as a family while your child reinforces his or her critical thinking and time management skills. Once your family has determined a project, create a plan that includes timelines, tasks, costs and responsibilities. Ideas for family projects include designing a garden, organizing and operating a family garage sale, constructing a home improvement project, coordinating a neighborhood fun run or bike rally, and creating plans for a road trip.

## COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Our communities have many fun and interactive learning opportunities for families during the summer months—and some are even free! Consider places such as parks, zoos, museums, festivals, concerts, local libraries and recreation centers. Community experiences offer children exposure to new places, people and cultures. Your child's teacher and school can also be a resource for tips and strategies to maintain learning during the summer break.

## INVITE A FRIEND

Create learning adventures with one or more of your child's friends in mind, such as designing a scavenger hunt for a friend or starting a book club in which children and their friends can share a snack while chatting about their latest good reads. Friends can help turn up the fun factor to the summer learning activities you have planned for your child!

## WRITE ABOUT IT

Invite your child to create a journal to record the events he or she participates in throughout the summer months. Encourage your child to incorporate illustrations and graphics along with his or her written words. In addition, children can practice letter-writing skills by chronicling their most memorable events to friends, family members, teachers or classmates.

## TEACHABLE MOMENTS

Teachable moments are unplanned situations that can be used as learning experiences. They can happen any time and anywhere. When they present themselves, capitalize on teachable moments as another way to boost your child's learning during the summer months.

*Written by Sara Van Dyke, NAA Special Programs Consultant.*

