



## USE IT OR LOSE IT

Research tells us that summer break is when learning loss can occur because children do not engage in educational activities during the summer months. This is known as the “summer slide” because children can slide back or lose significant amounts of their academic skills and knowledge, especially in reading and math, over the course of the summer break. In other words, we have to use it or lose it! This means that our children have to continue practicing what they have learned. If we don’t want our children to lose their skills, then let’s find some ways we can help:

1. Let’s encourage our children to practice their reading skills! Set a reading time each day and make sure they read at least 15-20 minutes.
2. Encourage fun reading during the summer. Help them look for books with topics that are interesting to them. Ex. If they like baseball, you may want to check out a book about a famous baseball player.
3. Take your child to the library often during the summer to check out books. Also look for special programs that the library has scheduled for your child’s age group. These are usually free and there are different topics each week.
4. Make sure you have a copy of your child’s recommended summer reading for their grade level. You can usually pick up a copy at your child’s school or the public library.
5. Teach by example. Let your children see you read every day.
6. When traveling, play games such as the road sign game that encourages your children to read the signs they pass. For instance, find a sign with a word that starts with an “A”, then a “B” and continue through the whole alphabet.
7. Sharpen your child’s math skills by including them in the kitchen. Let them help you make dinner and measure the ingredients or calculate how to double a recipe. Talk about fractions when cutting a pizza or a cake. This is also a great time to talk about the nutritional benefits of the foods you are making. Children who help prepare a meal are more likely to eat it.
8. Let your child help you make a shopping list and accompany you to the grocery store to select items. Let them help you compare prices and calculate items by the pound, etc.
9. Play school with your younger children and take turns being the teacher and the student. Let them teach you things they know and you can share things for them to practice. This is a great time to use math and reading practice books.
10. Most of all, summer should also be a break, so remember to make it fun!



# KEYS TO SUCCESSFUL PARENTING



## SUMMER BUCKET LIST

(Fun things to do during the Summer to enhance learning)

1. Plant and tend a garden together. Research and learn about the plants.
2. Have a family game night and play board games together. Some games teach math and critical thinking and all have directions that your older children can read aloud.
3. Learn new words. Place a new word on your refrigerator each day. Have everyone make sentences with the word throughout the day.
4. Take a local or virtual field trip. Look for local museums, community events and parks to explore. When getting out is not always possible, explore places on a computer. If you don't have one available at home, you can schedule time at your local library.
5. Search online for free printable educational activities, stories and coloring sheets to use at home.
6. Plan outdoor activities to boost physical, emotional and mental health. This may include a hike on a local trail, catching bugs, bird watching, rock hunting or you may even plan a nature scavenger hunt.
7. Search for free workshops. This may be for art, sports, day camps, etc.
8. Research together and do a fun science project.
9. Make lemonade and have a lemonade stand.
10. Visit a Farmer's Market.
11. Visit a zoo and learn about the animals.
12. Make homemade playdough together.
13. Color and create art with sidewalk chalk.
14. Make homemade pizza.
15. Have a campout in your backyard. Look at the stars, tell stories and make s'mores.
16. Bake cookies together or special treats and have a tea party.
17. Go on a picnic. Let your kids pick a food item from each of the food groups to pack.
18. Let your child help you create a reading space for them to read each day. It may include a lamp, a basket of books or bookshelf with books, pillows, a blanket, stuffed animals, etc.

