

FAMILY READS



While the statistics on summer reading loss seem discouraging, there are answers. Studies suggest that children who read as few as six books over the summer maintain the level of reading skills they achieved during the preceding school year. Reading more books leads to even greater success!



What Can Families Do to Keep Children Reading During the Summer?

As children's first and most important teachers, families have a major role to play in motivating children to read during the summer months. There are many strategies families might employ to encourage summertime reading:

Combine activities with books.

Summer leaves lots of time for kids to enjoy fun activities, such as going to the park, seeing a movie, or going to the beach. Why not also encourage them to read a book about the activity? If you're going to a baseball game, suggest that your child read a book about a favorite player beforehand. Take time to talk about the book and the game.



Visit the library.

If your child doesn't have a library card, summer is a great time to sign up for one. In addition to a wide selection of books to borrow, many libraries have fun, child-friendly summer reading programs.



Read aloud with kids.

Take your children to see a local storyteller or be one yourself. The summer months leave extra time for enthusiastic read-alouds with children, no matter what their age.

Lead by example.

Read the newspaper at breakfast, pick up a magazine at the doctor's office, and stuff a paperback in your beach bag. If kids see the adults around them reading often, they will understand that literature can be a fun and important part of their summer days.

Help kids find time to read.

Summer camp, music lessons, baseball games, and videos are all fun things kids like to do during the summer. However, by the end of the day, children may be too tired to pick up a book. When planning summer activities with children, remember to leave some time in their schedules for reading. Some convenient times may be before bedtime or over breakfast.



Have plenty of reading material around.

Storybooks aren't the only thing that kids can read for fun. Be sure to have newspapers, magazines, and informational material on hand that might spark the interest of a young reader.



Use books to break the boredom.

Without the regular school regimen, adults and kids need more activities to fill the hours. Books that teach kids how to make or do something are a great way to get kids reading and keep them occupied. Don't forget to take your kids' favorite reading series along on long road trips.



Talk it up.

Talking with your kids about what you have read also lets them know that reading is an important part of your life. Tell them why you liked a book, what you learned from it, or how it helped you—soon they might start doing the same.