

Five Resources for Family Engagement: Helping Families Prevent Summer Learning Loss

Summer is a perfect time for students of all ages, races/ethnicities, nationalities, and socio-economic levels to strengthen and reinforce their academic skills and still have ample time for summer activities. You are in a key position to inform your parents about the dangers of summer learning loss and to share fun and interactive activities that their children can do at home and in their communities which will help to prevent summer learning loss. These five free resources will provide you with tools to collaborate and share resources with families in your programs.

- 50 Creative Ways to Prevent Summer Brain Drain** This article shares fun ideas for reading and writing, places to go, interactive websites, and activities that students can do alone, with friends and/or family members. This article can be easily shared with your families. Just press the printer icon and you'll have the option to print one page or to create a PDF. <http://ww2.kqed.org/mindshift/2011/07/01/50-creative-ways-to-prevent-summer-brain-drain/>
- Keep the Summer Learning Going - Interactive and Fun Websites**
Tap into these websites to provide interactive, fun activities for kids this summer.
 - **National Geographic Kids** <http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/>
 - **Discovery Kids** <http://discoverykids.com/explore/>
 - **Young Explorers** http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/young_explorers/play.aspx
 - **NASA Quest** <http://quest.nasa.gov/>
 - **Time for Kids** <http://www.timeforkids.com/>
 - **Smithsonian Kids Collecting** http://www.smithsonianeducation.org/students/idealabs/amazing_collections.html
 - **Smithsonian Digging for Answers** http://www.smithsonianeducation.org/students/ideaLabs/digging_for_answers.html
 - **My Wonderful World (Smithsonian)** <http://www.smithsonianeducation.org/mywonderfulworld/>
- Summertime Reading Adventures** Reading is Fundamental (RIF) stresses the importance of reading during the summer months and helping students of all ages discover the joy of reading. They provide "Ten Weeks of Fun: RIF's Summer Reading Calendar." <http://www.rif.org/assets/Documents/parents/Summer.pdf>
- What Parents Can do to Keep Kids Sharp over the Summer The National Summer Learning Association gives parents and families tips on how to engage their children during the summer months.**
 - **English** http://www.summerlearning.org/resource/resmgr/program_resources/2010.parenttips_en.pdf
 - **Spanish** http://www.summerlearning.org/resource/resmgr/program_resources/2010.parenttips_sp.pdf
- Tips for Parents to Engage Teens in Summer Learning** This article shares tips for keeping high school students engaged during the summer months in order to prevent summer learning loss. <http://www.usnews.com/education/blogs/high-school-notes/2012/05/02/3-tips-for-parents-to-engage-teens-in-summer-learning>

GET READY FOR SUMMER

Five things you can do to prepare for your summer program

April 19, 2016

If you are an educator responsible for providing a high quality summer program for children and youth in your community, you are probably busy right now with planning for summer and making sure you finish the school year strong. It is easy to fall into the routine of this busy time. Take just a moment to consider some of the proactive things you can do to take your summer program to the next level.

1. Brainstorm ideas for your unique program culture

High quality summer learning programs feel more like camp than school. If your program is school based consider decorating and re-branding classrooms and other learning spaces. With the right theme, you can transform a classroom into a cabin or a cafeteria into a mess hall. Or go with a space theme and turn the office into mission control. The opportunities are endless.

2. Sharpen your plan for professional development

Begin with the end in mind. What are your goals for the training? How will you achieve them? Consider what other support is available for summer program staff. Who will provide coaching? Focus on continuous improvement. Review the feedback you received on the training you provided last year. Are there changes you can make?

3. Find creative ways to give youth a voice

Public Profit developed a great resource, [Creative Ways to Solicit Youth Input](#), that has many non-traditional ways to solicit input from youth, including interviews, collages, and song and dance routines.

4. Plan an event for National Summer Learning Day

Summer Learning Day is July 14, 2016! [Summer Learning Day](#) is an annual national advocacy day led by the National Summer Learning Association (NSLA) to elevate the importance of keeping kids learning, safe and healthy every summer.

5. Engage a local leader as your Summer Matters Champion

Have your superintendent or other local leaders sign on publicly to [say that summer matters](#) in your community. You can also host a site visit with local stakeholders such as superintendents, school board members, and community members to highlight your summer program.

<http://www.summermatters.net/get-ready-summer/>