

Preventing the Summer Slide: How Parents Can Keep Kids Learning All Summer Long

Summer break is a time for rest, fun, and family—but it can also lead to a phenomenon known as the “summer slide,” where students lose some of the academic gains they made during the school year. Studies show that children can lose up to two months of reading and math skills over the summer if their minds aren’t kept engaged.

The good news? With a little planning and creativity, parents can help their children stay sharp while still enjoying all that summer has to offer.

1. Make Reading a Daily Habit

Encourage your child to read for at least 20 minutes a day. Let them choose books that interest them—graphic novels, non-fiction, fantasy, magazines, even cookbooks! Visit the Kilbourn Public Library for free summer reading programs and story times.

Tip: Read the stories together and discuss them. Ask questions that start with “why” or “what if” to spark critical thinking.

2. Practice Math in Real Life

Try incorporating numbers into everyday activities:

- Cook or bake together and have your child measure ingredients.
- Estimate the cost of groceries and calculate change.
- Play math-based games like Sudoku, Monopoly, or card games.

Online tools like Khan Academy or Prodigy Math Game offer free and engaging math practice tailored to your child’s grade level.

3. Explore the World Around You

Museums, zoos, science centers, and nature hikes are great ways to stimulate curiosity. Ask your child to write a few sentences or draw a picture about what they saw or learned afterward.

Can’t travel? Take a virtual field trip to places like the Smithsonian, NASA, or the San Diego Zoo—all available online for free.

4. Keep a Summer Journal

Writing helps kids retain language skills and express creativity. Give them a journal to write about their summer adventures, thoughts, or even to create stories or comic strips.

Younger kids can draw and label pictures, while **older kids** might enjoy blogging or writing letters to friends and family.

6. Set Goals and Celebrate Progress

Help your child set small learning goals over the summer—like finishing a book series, mastering a math skill, or learning a new hobby. Track their progress and celebrate achievements with simple rewards, such as a special outing or certificate.

Final Thought:

Summer learning doesn't have to feel like school. With just a bit of effort, parents can turn everyday moments into opportunities for growth and discovery. When August rolls around, your child will return to school not only refreshed but ready to succeed!