



Health & Wellness

Odyssey's Wise Nutrition and Healthy Lifestyles Program

Dedicated to promoting, protecting and enhancing the health and learning potential of our students, families & staff.

Simple Summer Strategies for Brain and Body Health

Adapted from the learning experts at MCGraw Hill Education and health gurus at Fit 2 be Kids Org. <http://www.fit2bekids.com/>;
<https://medium.com/inspired-ideas-prek-12/summer-literacy-strategies-elementary-7e6db8f113ba> Visit websites for additional information.

Summer vacation is a great opportunity for kids to explore their interests, discover the world around them, use their imaginations, and just do what kids do when they're not behind a desk. But all of that unstructured play time has some adverse implications. [Research shows](#) that after summer vacation, **kids can lose up to two months of curriculum content knowledge that they gained over the school year,** and teachers end up spending weeks in the fall reviewing content from the previous grade level. **Every second a child spends in the classroom is invaluable learning time.** So how do we **prevent the summer learning slide,** especially in a content area as vital as literacy?

1. Enroll your child in your local library's summer reading program. Participate in summer reading programs, where kids can log the books they read over the summer and work towards reading incentives. Many libraries also have summer reading events, such as visiting authors, fairs, puppet shows, fitness activities, or readings – another incentive to read!

2. Develop an at-home reading challenge. Challenge your kids to a reading experience at home. Get creative with it: make it a game, craft, or even a physical activity. Our summer literacy at medium.com [Pinterest Board](#) is filled with unique ideas, like [summer reading bookworms](#) or [reading bingo](#).

3. Use a summer reading list that is age or interest specific. Search the internet to find book lists for kids -many parents and teachers have taken the time to build amazing lists, so take advantage of the resources!

4. Get the whole family involved. Try incorporating reading into family time: a book on tape for a road trip, do a read-aloud of a great book once a week, or have your whole family read a book, then watch the movie together. Make a habit of teaching your child to read during daily activities: the recipe when you're cooking, road signs in the car, or even food labels during shopping. Set an example by reading and sharing your favorite family friendly books with your child.

5. Practice essential vocabulary outside to boost fluency and get moving. Fluency involves reading quickly and accurately. Incorporate practice into fun outdoor activities, like sight word hopscotch or a sight word water play/balloon game.

6. Incorporate arts and crafts in writing. Download a printable blank journal. Kids are great storytellers and love a finished product that they can be proud of, so let them go wild with narration and art while still practicing their writing skills.

7. Combine reading with outdoor summer fun. Many kids shy away from reading in the summer because they truly just want to be outside and moving. Challenge your kids to read in different places in your backyard or neighborhood, or see our list of activities that combine literacy with physical activity (medium.com).

8. Be prepared for learning and activities by eating breakfast . Make sure to eat nutritious foods that support your physical activity for the day as well as for bone, muscle, & brain growth -. a bowl of oatmeal, with fresh fruit & nuts, plus scrambled eggs.

9. Eat plenty of fresh fruits & vegetables daily. Make sure ½ of your plate is filled with fruits and veggies with each meal.

10. Always stay hydrated – Replace sugary sports drinks & sodas with water; add slices of fresh fruit (strawberries, lemons, limes or watermelons) to water for a delicious flavor. Staying hydrated prevents heat related illness: symptoms are headache, cold sweats, exhaustion, nausea and/or vomiting, and diarrhea.

11. Get plenty of rest – Making sure you get plenty of rest is important to prevent heat exhaustion while playing outside. Take frequent shaded breaks. Getting 8-10 hours of sleep every night is important for recuperation and growth.

12. Stay Active! Find activities you enjoy; like riding your bike, swimming, playing sports with your friends; a minimum of 60 minutes of daily physical activity is recommended for all children.

~Wishing you a Fun, Healthy and Safe Summer~