



MONTHLY  
MESSAGE:

AVOIDING THE

# Summer Slide

The summer is full of chances to make new memories with your child. If your child is a preschooler or enrolled in a Head Start program, the summer may also offer a break in your child's normal routine. Unfortunately, this break can sometimes lead to a loss of learning known as the "summer slide." The slide makes it hard for children to pick up where they left off in school. When school begins in the fall, some children are already behind. Research shows the gap can get wider as children grow. Teachers then have to spend time reminding children what they learned before the summer break. This takes away time that could be spent learning new things.

Just like a plant, children's brains need consistent "watering" to keep them growing all year long. As your child's first teacher, you play an important role all year long. You don't have to create lesson plans or spend hours together for learning to take place. It can be as simple as reading, talking, singing or asking questions everyday. You can build on what your child already knows or go over what they have already learned. Research shows that reading is the area most affected by the summer slide for children K-12. Reading together is a great way to encourage learning. You can read signs on the road, labels on boxes, or books from the local library.

The good news is children don't have to sacrifice fun to be learning! Although *you* may not be on summer break, you can create teaching moments during daily routines. The summer offers the perfect backdrop for learning to take place, especially outdoors.

# summertime FUN



Have a 3-5 year old? Try some of these ideas to splash learning into your child's summer:

## OUTDOOR FUN



**Nature Walk-** Take a walk in your neighborhood or a local park to hunt for items. (Ex. Smooth stones, long sticks). This helps your child learn how to sort and classify.

**Cloud Gazing-** Lay down on a blanket in the yard. Talk about the different shapes you see the clouds make.

**Visit playground-** Enjoy a local playground together. They are great places to be social with other children and for children to stay physically active.

**Sidewalk chalk-** Use sidewalk chalk to practice letters or play hopscotch and call out numbers as you hop.

**Ride a bike-** While making great memories, your child will practice following directions and strengthen muscles and coordination. Start with safety wheels and always wear a helmet.

## EVERYDAY IDEAS

- Read together. While reading, stop often and ask your child questions along the way. (Ex. Tell me what's happening in this picture? Ask how an event made the character feel)
- Make up stories as you drive in the car or ride the bus. As you see strangers, ask your child to come up with a story of where the person is going.
- Count anything you can during bath time like the number of splashes your child makes or the number of times you pour water on him or her.
- As you clean together, ask how many things your child sees that start with a certain letter.
- Play "Simon Says" with your four or five year old. This is a great game to practice how to pay attention.

## Need more ideas?

Download our **Parent Guide**. It's full of kindergarten readiness ideas to try at home. Visit [kidsnow.ky.gov](http://kidsnow.ky.gov) and click the **School Readiness** tab.

For ways to boost your child's brain during everyday activities, download the **vrom** app at [joinvroom.org](http://joinvroom.org).

## COMMUNITY FUN

- If possible, enroll your child in a summer program. Check with schools, colleges and recreation centers.
- If your child will spend the summer with family or friends, encourage them to download the **vrom** app for age-specific, daily activities.
- Take a trip to a local library, zoo or museum. Many provide programs to keep children engaged and learning in a group setting.
- Check if the public school system in your county offers programs for incoming kindergarteners. Some school districts partner with local businesses to give free admission to local attractions or they host special events.