

The Tutor Times™

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Summer Camp: Sound Mind, Safe Body

Why Year-Round Learning is Essential to Continued Progress

Celebrate National Safety Month – Every Month

Simple Activities for Lasting Memories

Pick up! Nature Is Calling

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Help Your Child Hold on to What They've Learned

Spring has finally made it to my neighborhood. And while parents are busy getting out the tricycles and patio furniture, they are also contemplating the perennial question of what to do with the kids when the school year ends. It might well be that the best answer is to enroll them in a summer program. A century ago, even young children were needed at home to help with farm chores during the summer. But few of us still grow crops and we now know a long summer break at home isn't best for children's learning. Extensive research consistently finds it isn't just that children don't usually keep acquiring new information and skills when they're not in school, they actually forget some of what they already know.

This research really isn't surprising. We all tend to forget things we don't practice and use regularly. It's why our tennis game and our understanding of photosynthesis fade over time. And while we can certainly relearn both these things, the time it takes keeps us from moving forward more quickly. Young children are even more likely to experience a summer learning slide since many of the skills that they are learning haven't yet become deeply embedded and automatic. This is true of academic skills, such as naming letters and counting, but is also the case for the softer, social skills that children are learning in their early years.

Learning to play nicely with others is one of the most important goals of preschool. And although some children seem to learn to do this naturally, many need ongoing opportunities to practice the sharing, interacting and cooperating, sometimes as leader and sometimes as follower, that are hallmarks of group play. These social skills, which are often learned with the same kind of teacher-guided practice as more academic skills, need to become consistent and automatic when children are young. By the time they are 7 or 8 years old, it is much more difficult for

them to learn social skills. So, summer programs become an important place to continue the social development of young children.

There is one more important reason to consider a summer program for young children. They, as well as many adults, generally function best with a consistent, predictable daily routine. When I visit my young grandchildren, for example, I make sure I don't sit in their seats at the kitchen table or ask them to get dressed before breakfast when they are used to eating in their pajamas. They are happiest and feel most secure when things happen in the way they are used to. For many toddlers and preschoolers, it takes some time to establish a pattern of getting to school, comfortably separating from parents, participating in school routines and reconnecting with family at pickup time. Once this pattern is established, it is usually preferable to maintain it than change it for a few months before starting it up again in fall.

Both research and what we know of young children suggest that a summer program may well be the best option for your child. Look for one that combines familiar routines and learning with fun and expanded outdoor activities, now that warmer weather has arrived. But, as important as this recommendation may be, don't forget the special memories of summer you probably have from your own childhood. Summer provides a great opportunity to visit with family, explore new locations on vacation, enjoy extra time with a parent on a reduced work schedule or just kick back and relax. Be sure to take a little time to help your children create their own wonderful summer memories.

*Dr. Joan Firestone
Dr. Firestone is a leading educational expert on brain development, early care and education, and emerging literacy. Check out more insightful articles from Dr. Joan on our blog: <http://learningcaregroup.com/author/drfirestone/>*

With Us, It's Always Safety First

Every June, the National Safety Council (NSC) encourages citizens and organizations to get involved and participate in National Safety Month. Each week carries a theme that brings attention to critical safety issues. Check out their website at http://www.nsc.org/nsc_events/Nat_Safe_Month/ to discover ways to promote safety this June. Then use this checklist of features we offer as you look at other programs.

- Fun, safe environment
- School readiness
- Staff trained in CPR/First Aid
- Ongoing teacher training
- Year-round safety practices
- Background checks required for staff
- Strict safety and security policies
- Age-appropriate practices/guidelines
- Skill specific learning areas
- Daily small/large group activities



Dear Families,

We listened when our parents said they would like Summer sessions to last for one to two weeks. We also involved our families by letting you help pick those sessions. The result is an amazing Summer program waiting for your child.

Children ages six weeks to five years will enjoy our outstanding child care program and standard educational lesson plans. They will also get introduced to the Summer camp school-age program through special activities and visitors. Plus, Kindergartners will love our new school-readiness program.

School-age children (ages 6–12) will experience daily activities and amazing field trips. Not only will kids engage in activities, but they will also continue to enjoy math, science and literacy experiences throughout the day and week. Choices for Summer sessions include:

ArtTime — From art that the children create on their own to special projects led by our staff, this session will open up the world of artistic expression.

SportTime — From learning the skills of a sport to benefiting from the exercise involved in team play, children will participate in numerous physical activities.

NatureTime — We will explore the natural world we live in — from plants and trees to the oceans and the sky above.

RhythmTime — During this session, children will move to music and explore their singing voice and instrumental talents.

AnimalTime — You and your child may have a pet or been to a zoo, but how much does your child really know about the animals of earth? This camp will reveal the mysteries of the animal kingdom.

CookingTime — Children will use teamwork and planning skills as they take on this session's food-related long-term project.

StageTime — In this session, they will write plays, act out scenes from the classics and end the summer with our annual talent show.

Here's how we plan to do all these fun activities and still have a safe Summer:

Reducing The Risk Of Being Stung

1. Wear light-colored, smooth-finished clothing.
2. Avoid perfumed soaps, shampoos, and deodorants.
3. Avoid bananas and banana-scented toiletries.
4. Wear clean clothing and bathe daily. Sweat angers bees.
5. Avoid flowering plants.
6. Keep areas clean. Social wasps thrive in places where humans discard food.

7. If a single stinging insect is flying around, remain still or lie face down on the ground.
8. If attacked by several stinging insects at the same time, run to get away from them. Bees release a chemical when they sting. This alerts other bees.

What to Do If A Person Is Stung?

1. Have someone stay with the victim to be sure that the victim does not have an allergic reaction.
2. Wash the site with soap and water.
3. Remove the stinger by using 4" X 4" gauze, or a business card wiped over the area. Never use tweezers, nor squeeze the stinger.
4. Apply ice to reduce swelling.
5. Do not scratch the sting.

Preventing Heat Stress

1. Know signs/symptoms of heat-related illnesses, such as headaches, mental confusion, weakness, vomiting and others
2. Block out direct sun or other heat sources
3. Use cooling fans/air-conditioning
4. Rest regularly
5. Drink lots of water and avoid caffeinated drinks
6. Wear lightweight, light colored, loose-fitting clothes

You've made an important decision to invest in your child's development, and we take the responsibility you place in us very seriously.

Sincerely,
The Education Team

It's Not too Soon to Think About Fall

Even though Summer is just beginning, it's the perfect time to plan ahead for Fall care. That's why we're planning a great, informative event in anticipation of the sun setting on the Summer.

**Stop by your school on
Thursday, August 4th from 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.***
to get a sneak peek of all the fantastic things we have in store for your child!

You'll be able to explore children's spaces, interact with teachers, socialize with other families, experience enrichment programs and, most importantly, share a hands-on experience with your child using the curriculum.

*Participating schools only. Please confirm with your school prior to the event.



Give Your Child the Gift of Nature

When you arrive home today, please do an experiment: stand outside in front of your home and listen. What do you hear? Do you hear children playing? Unfortunately, the answer is likely to be no. The fact is that children are not playing outside as often as they used to. Why do you suppose this is? One reason is that many adults fear children may become ill if they get too dirty, too warm or too cold. Also children spend a considerable amount of time inside watching television, working on computers, or playing electronic games. Finally, a reason children are playing outside less is that many are overscheduled. They lack the time to play outside because of family commitments. It seems that instead of allowing children to experience the gift of nature, we are keeping them from it.

By not allowing children to experience nature, we may actually be harming our children. Richard Louv, author of *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children From Nature-Deficit Disorder*, has studied the effects on children who have an absence of nature in their lives. This deficit can lead to children having under-developed senses. It can also lead to children displaying attention problems and having higher rates of physical and emotional problems.

Louv says that it is highly beneficial for children to spend time in nature. It aids in the development of their physical, social and emotional skills. Children can gain natural physical exercise while playing outside. They develop many of their large and small muscle skills by running, jumping, climbing, and pedaling. Children develop socially by communicating

with peers. Emotionally, they develop a sense of self and independence throughout their explorations.

Encourage your children's outside play:

- Have a large area that allows for sand, paint, water, clay, etc. Children can be free and creative. They will not have to worry about how much of the materials may spill.
- Go on nature walks and hikes. Hide items in your outside space to encourage seek and find games.
- Have a variety of balls. Encourage kicking, throwing, catching, rolling as well as hiding. One great idea is to bury balls in mounds of leaves, snow, sand, etc.
- Climb; if you do not have a climbing tree or structure you could always take a walk to the park and encourage your children to climb there.
- Have lots of loose materials for building. Sanded wood pieces, large PVC pipes, cardboard boxes, fabrics, and Plexiglas work well. Children can combine these items and leave up their constructions without having to worry about cleaning them up to make room for something else.

Think back to your own childhood. What were your favorite ways to play outside? Give your children the gift of nature by sharing your favorites with them. Offer them opportunities to experience the incredible wonders the natural world has to offer.

It Takes Two

Here are a few great ideas for connecting with your child. Each activity can take as little or as long as you'd like, but the time spent together will last a lifetime.

Infants — Hide several of your baby's favorite toys behind pillows or furniture. Get down on the floor with her and have a scavenger hunt looking for them. Crawl along with her as you look for the different items. Tell her what item you are looking for so she knows what to look for, "Let's look over here for your bunny rabbit."

Young Toddlers — You could do this activity inside or outside. Spread out some boxes in a line, making sure there is space between them. Have your child jump over the boxes as he follows the line. Jump along behind him. When you get to the end of the line, turn around, and move over the boxes a different way; such as walking around them or crawling around them. Let your child think of some other ways to move also.

Older Toddlers — Sit on the floor across from your child. Roll a small ball back and forth with your child. After about five rolls, move back a little bit and continue rolling the ball. See how far can you get from your child and still roll a ball successfully.

Preschoolers — Gather some picture books or magazines and place them in a pile on the floor, or take them outside with you as you sit together on a blanket. Look for pictures that show people or animals moving. Talk about the movement you see and ask your child if she can imitate the same type of movement. Move along with her also. Have fun looking for different types of movement pictures.

School-Agers — You can do this activity inside or outside but it needs to be on a smooth surface. Gather about 10-12 empty plastic water bottles and set them up in a pyramid shape. Make a starting line as far away from the bottles as you want. Hand your child a ball and see how many bottles he can knock down in two rolls. Take turns setting the bottles up and knocking them down.