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Family Newsletter

www.tutoringcenter.com

Stop the Summer Brain Drain!

Kids Lose One to Three Months of Learning

Did your child's brain shrink last summer? Probably not, but it may have shifted into reverse, according to a study by Dr. Harris Cooper, professor of psychology at the University of Missouri-Columbia. The study found that when students return to school after a long summer vacation, they've lost one to three months worth of learning.

Kids Lose Most in Math

The decline is more detrimental for math than it is for reading. *"All students lose math skills,"* says Cooper. It may be because community and home environments give kids more opportunities to practice reading than math. The study also found that income has an impact on how much a student loses or gains in reading. Middle-class children actually gained in reading over the summer, while lower-income students experienced losses. Cooper attributes this to the enrichment activities that many middle-class kids participate in over the summer, such as camp and trips.

What You Can Do

Your kids don't have to spend the summer stuck in reverse. "Parents can help their kids retain educational skills," says Cooper. He suggests the following five tips to kick off a learning-filled summer.

1. Keep lots of books around and make regular trips to the library. Most libraries schedule special summer events for kids. Sign up your family!
2. Think about what your kids may be learning next year when you plan the family vacation. Talk with teachers to find out what they'll be covering in class. If it's a unit on the civil war for example, you may want to schedule a visit to Gettysburg. If it's geology, visit a national park.
3. Keep math in mind. Since kids lose more math skills than anything else over the summer, try to do some special planning to find math-related activities. For example, if you can't decide whether to sign your child up for "Shakespeare's Theater" or

"Math Magic" at the local community center, go with the math.

4. Consider summer school or tutoring. Struggling kids can get a lot of different kinds of help from these programs. Summer school can also enrich and accelerate learning in areas where kids show a special interest.

5. Call the curriculum coordinator in your child's school district, visit the school board office, or contact the schools of education at local colleges and universities to find out what educational programs will be offered in your area over the summer.

Remember to keep it fun! You don't want to sour your kids on learning during the summer break.

Good luck,

Edward S. Thalheimer, Ph.D., Founder
The Tutoring Centers



Create a Sunny Day Rule

It's the Monday after the Fourth of July. I'm up early. Birds are singing. The dawn sun is blazing. It's going to be a sunny, summer day. A summer day in the truest sense, because my three boys are home from school. No buses to catch, no backpacks filled with books. They can sleep until they wake up.

Chris, my youngest, will wake first, trundle downstairs in his boxer shorts, pee, and scratch himself, wondering what to do in the quiet house. His first instinct will be to go to the family room and turn on the TV. But there it will be: Daddy's homemade sign, taped to the set.

**No TV today. Sunny Day Rule.
Dad.**

He'll grumble and look around. And for a few minutes, he won't know what to do with himself. But then he'll either pick up a toy, grab a book, or dress himself and think about calling friends to play. I established the Sunny Day Rule early in my children's lives. And even though it causes dissension and complaining at first, I'm serious about it. If it's raining and cold outside, they know I'm no Captain Blight. I'll let them watch TV. But if it's a beautiful day, there's no excuse for growing roots on the sofas. Outside with you, I tell them. Go! Go build something! Go swimming! Go ride your bikes!

The Summertime Blues

I dreaded the end of first grade. Life without the beautiful and kind Miss McCarthy, my teacher, was unimaginable. She always made me feel special and smart and she laughed at my jokes. I adored her.

I had blossomed in first grade. The scared, shy kid who had run out of the classroom chasing his mother on the first day of school had become an eager, confident student. I had also made great classroom friends and playmates. This was mighty important to me since there were no kids my age to play with in my neighborhood. Without my usual daily dose of friends, summertime would be bleak.

I wanted Miss McCarthy to teach me in second grade--and every grade thereafter. Why break up such a successful team? Unfortunately, Miss Christie awaited me in second grade. She was an imposing six-footer with a hair net and the personality of granite. I was only six but I felt my carefree days were gone forever.

The school year brings familiarity and structure to a kid's life. When it ends, it's hard for kids to express their fears about what's next. For children graduating to middle school and high school, the summer provides plenty of time to worry about the move to a new school. As the school year draws to a close, these deeply felt emotions may show up as moodiness, defiant behavior, physical aches and pains, and regression. Because it is traditional to celebrate the arrival of summer vacation, it can be embarrassing for them to acknowledge their apprehension.

During the final weeks of school, parents are so busy arranging summertime childcare and activities that they don't pick up on their kids' problem with these transitions. You can show empathy for your child's predicament by saying something like: "I guess kids are still happy when school is over, like when I was your age. But I can remember some years -- when I had a teacher that I liked and good friends -- I didn't want school to end. You know what I mean?" It doesn't matter if they respond to your comments. It shows that you understand what they're going through.

So be aware that all your great summer plans might be met with less enthusiasm than you'd expect. Give them time to work through the anxieties created by school's ending. And if they have a Miss McCarthy they are bidding farewell, tell them to write her a few letters this summer. She'll write back and she'll always welcome their visits.

Better yet, go make yourself breakfast. Ever heard of myelin? Myelin is a gel-like substance that grows along brain cells when learning takes place. Imagine dipping a fishing net in jelly. That's how a memory for life, or better yet, call it a mastery, appears in the neural networks of our brains. That's how something a child has learned to do, or experienced, is stored.

Children's brains contain 10,000 miles of neural network for every cubic inch of cortex. That's a lot of potential real estate in which to install knowledge. So, at least in our house, we invoke the Sunny Day Rule for summertime because our children's chances of "myelinating" fresh neural nets soars every time we put that sign on the TV. There's so much incredible potential there. No sense having it flicker at some dim level for hours on end, while the sun shines bright outside.

But what will I think up for my child to do, you ask? That's the whole point. Don't bother thinking up anything. Let your child do it. In this case, doing less is really doing a whole lot more.

WE HAVE SOME GREAT SUMMER PROGRAM OPTIONS THIS YEAR FOR CURRENT FAMILIES

This summer you can enhance your child's regular year-round program with the following options:

1. Purchase Extra Sessions - you can add a 3rd session per week.
2. Enroll other children in your family into the FAST-PACED SUMMER PROGRAM and receive a discounted tuition rate. This year, we are opening this option to extended family members such as cousins, nieces, and nephews.
3. Family members who enroll this summer will be awarded 2 additional sessions.

Contact your Center Director to inquire about our family summer tuition!



THE TUTORING CENTER

SUMMER PROGRAMS

Would you like your child to do better in school next year? Would you like your child to start the school year with more confidence? Does your child have difficulty in reading or math?

THE TUTORING CENTER'S FAST-PACED SUMMER PROGRAM addresses all of these needs. Step by step, using THE TUTORING CENTER's unique "Rotational Approach To Learning" and our exclusive one-to-one format, your child will start the next school year with a smile, and best of all, will begin to enjoy reading and math! For your child, reading and math are the foundation for further academic success. If you feel that your child needs help in these critical areas, have your child tested at the center in your area.

Check out

THE TUTORING CENTER'S
Web Site
for more information
www.tutoringcenter.com

THE TUTORING CENTER'S Office Corner

- Scheduling make-ups. MAKE-UP times may be scheduled after 2:00 on the day you would like to come in. The more you come in, the faster your child will improve!

- Do you have an IEP coming up for your child in the fall? We will be happy to attend and help you with this important meeting. Just call and let us know.

If you are going to be more than 30 minutes late in picking up your child from the center, please contact us to let your child know. We don't want children waiting by the door or outside for too long.

Summer Learning That Isn't Math and Reading

Education Expert Advice from Peggy Gisler, Ed.S. and Marge Eberts, Ed.S.

Question: I have a daughter who is going into the second grade this next year. The math and reading levels are too easy for her, and I want to keep her challenged over the summer vacation. I want to teach her more difficult math and reading. I am not the best teacher in the world, but I want my child challenged and not held back. What can I do? All her standardized test scores were above grade level and the work in first grade this past year was too easy. Please help.

Answer: Since your daughter is already light years ahead of her classmates, it does not make much sense to focus on teaching her more reading and math this summer. Rather than concentrating on academics where your daughter is already a superstar, it would be better to spend your time helping her develop other interests and talents. You want to have a well-rounded child. The best thing that you can do for your daughter this summer is to have fun with her as you help her discover her personal interests. You can begin by exposing her to your own interests. When you find a particular area that attracts her, give her opportunities to explore that area in depth. For example, if she expresses an interest in music, take her to casual concerts in parks where she can also run about. Or you might want to have her begin taking lessons on the piano or some other instrument that she would like to play. If your daughter has an interest in animals, plan visits to farms and zoos and read stories about animals together. Encourage your child to learn about a wide variety of subjects such as art, nature, music, museums, and sports.

There are so many exciting things that parents of gifted children can do with them in the summer to develop their aptitudes, talents, and potentials for advanced learning and creative productivity. Check out [The National Association for Gifted Children](http://www.nagc.org) website for more ideas. Plus, you can learn about the different publications and materials that the organization has to educate the parents of gifted children. When your daughter returns to school in the fall, you should talk with her teacher about your child's need for more challenging work. One solution could be to place her in a third or fourth grade class for one or more subjects.



Make Summertime a Healthy Time

Everybody looks forward to vacations and holidays, and perhaps no period of time off is more anticipated than summer break. But as the first active days of the season turn into the lazier days of late summer, children often get bored and sit down in front of the TV with an unhealthy bag of potato chips!

Remember, children older than two years need a minimum of one hour a day of moderate physical activity. Achieving this level of activity is important to minimize their later risk for obesity and the diseases associated with it. Adequate physical activity independently decreases the risk for heart disease later in life and is important for the normal development of strong bones.

As with vegetables, many children think of exercise as "something that's good for you." Remember the tips offered earlier for getting your kids to eat those vegetables? Just as you can disguise vegetables in other foods or offer a variety of them from which your child can choose, so it goes with exercise! A family hike or an afternoon flying a kite together is exercise in disguise. So is a day building sand castles or playing Wiffle ball on the beach. When we don't offer our kids any opportunities for exercise, it's not fair to expect them to get off the couch every day on their own.



Check out
THE TUTORING CENTER'S
web site
for more information and franchise
opportunities.

www.tutoringcenter.com

We grow through reputation and parent referrals

**GIVE A GIFT TO YOUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS
THIS SUMMER.**

**They will receive FREE testing plus a \$50 tuition
credit.***

**available at participating locations only*

When we started **THE TUTORING CENTER'S** in 1994, we must have had the right idea because, each year, the demand for our personalized tutoring programs has increased dramatically. **THE TUTORING CENTER'S** commitment to personal attention, quality, and service have always set us apart.

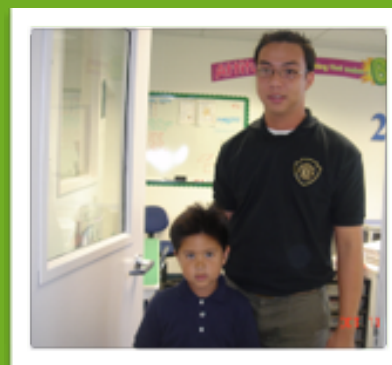
As families benefit from our unique approach, they refer **THE TUTORING CENTER** to their friends and neighbors. These referrals are at the heart of our growth as we quietly expand without a flashy advertising campaign. Families recognizing the clear benefit of a "personal coach," are choosing our unique approach. We know our system works and we want to reach out to as many children as we can.

*If you know of a friend or neighbor that could benefit from our services, please tell them about our **FAST-PACED SUMMER PROGRAM**. This will get them in the door so that they can get started with the testing process.*

For helping us spread the word this summer, you and your child will be awarded for each referral that enrolls in one of our programs. For each referral into one of our year-round programs, you will receive a TUITION CREDIT. In addition, your child will receive 20 "grab bags" to use at THE TUTORING CENTER toy store.

***Contact your Center Director to learn more about our referral program. Tuition credit and discounts may vary from location to location.**

Thank you very much for your help.



IF YOU KNOW A FAMILY WHO COULD USE OUR SERVICES, GIVE THEM A VIP GUEST PASS WITH YOUR NAME ON IT.

IF THE FAMILY ENROLLS IN ONE OF OUR REGULAR PROGRAMS, YOU WILL RECEIVE TUITION CREDIT.

THANK YOU IN ADVANCE FOR SPREADING THE WORD.

