

# Summer's cool

## Website helps kids keep learning all summer

**W**ith most schools out for the year and the first day of summer only three days away, kids are at the beginning of one of the best perks of youth: summer vacation.

Many adults think wistfully back to carefree days of splashing in the sprinkler, running after the ice cream truck and catching fireflies. But the reality of summer break for many children living on the lower rungs of the economic ladder is not so idyllic.

For them, summer can mean three months of missing daily nutritious meals, unsupervised days spent in potentially dangerous environments and a “summer slide” of knowledge gained during the school year. The educational backslide compounds every year, resulting in an achievement gap that leaves underprivileged youth at a significant disadvantage when it comes to pursuing higher education and a well-paying career.

**SummerLearning.org** is the website of the National Summer Learning Association. It offers information and resources to help parents, students and educators close the achievement gap between students from upper- and lower-income families. The association's vision is for all kids to have access to summer learning experiences so they don't lose what they've learned and fall behind.

### Teachable moments

The experiences that the site advocates for are not only formal programs covering subjects such as reading, science and math, but also employing strategies that incorporate learning into everyday activities. This can be a trip to the library or a museum, or figuring out a child's statistics from a sport he or she plays. They also range from academics to exercise, nutrition, work experience and more.

The two sections of the site that are the most useful for someone who wants to improve a child's summer learning experiences are the Summer

Learning Day and Summer Opportunity Project pages. Both of these sections have information, links and downloadable resources that can be used to help kids keep learning all summer long.

The Summer Learning website is nicely designed and easy to navigate. It has a bright, cheerful color palette and unified, organized typography. The photos and graphics are of good quality and used effectively. The writing is clear and concise with just a little hint of “marketing speak” sprinkled in.

Summertime is for kids to enjoy, but that doesn't mean they should fall behind academically. This site can help kids learn while still having fun.

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