

# Parent May Newsletter

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## Maximize Summer

Did you know that students who do not practice reading or math over the summer lose an average of two-to-three months of skills? In addition, your child needs to participate in physical and social activities to keep not just the mind strong but the body as well. What can you as a parent do to help maximize summer for your child?

Encourage your child to read. Reading as few as six books over the summer can help your child avoid losing critical reading skills. Reading can be encouraged in many ways. For instance, watch TV with closed captioning instead of sound or have your child help find items on the grocery list when shopping. Keep various reading materials around the house that your child is interested in reading. Reading aloud to your child will build fluency, vocabulary and comprehension, as well as improve the parent-child relationship. [StorylineOnline](#) is a free site where actors read books aloud. The actors also engage the children by telling them why they like to read or chose a specific book to share.

Students practicing as few as three or four math problems a day will help keep their skills sharp. The kitchen is a great place to practice math skills. Have younger children put measuring devices in order of size. Have fun with a recipe by having an older child double or halve the ingredients. Let your child practice their skills on telling time by calculating the cooking time needed. When shopping, have your child estimate the cost of several items, figure the tax or calculate the change owed. In the produce section, have your child figure the final cost based on price per pound.

Games are a great way to build skills. [Sumdog](#) is a free online site for students in grades kindergarten through eight that lets them practice their reading and math skills. It is an interactive gaming site that allows students to become superheroes and compete in fun activities while building skills.

As you think of ways to keep your child mentally and physically active this summer, consider asking yourself or your child's teacher the following questions.

- How do I keep my child engaged in learning activities this summer?
- Does my child have reading materials for the summer?
- Does my child have engaging math activities at home?
- Where can I find summer reading programs?
- What summer courses are available for my child?
- What summer experiences are available for my child?
- What summer food programs are available for my child?

## **National Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month**

May is National Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month. According to the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, 6.3 million children younger than 18 have asthma, and more than 50 million Americans have allergies.

When thinking about your child, consider the following questions.

- How do I communicate with the school about my child's food allergies or asthma?
- Does my child's school have my correct contact information in case of an emergency?
- Who do I contact if my child needs medication during the day for his/her allergies?

To learn more about asthma, be sure to check out the Arkansas Department of Health website at <http://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/programsServices/communications/features/Pages/CDCAsthmaFacts.aspx> or visit the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America at <http://www.aafa.org/page/asthma-and-allergy-awareness-month.aspx>.



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