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# I N S I G H T S

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## FOR FAMILIES



### Keep learning this summer



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INSIGHTS FOR FAMILIES is provided by your child's school in recognition of your role as a partner in education. Insights is produced by Marcia Latta, communications consultant.

Summer vacation is a needed break from the school routine, but many educators notice a significant decline in academic progress when the new school year starts. By some estimates, students don't regain their progress from the previous school year until one or more months into the new one.

#### **Which students are at risk of the summer slide?**

Summer vacation isn't new, but research into summer learning loss is gaining new attention. The Brookings Institute published several findings:

- (1) on average, students' achievement scores declined over summer vacation by one month's worth of school-year learning,
- (2) declines were sharper for math than for reading, and
- (3) the extent of loss was larger at higher grade levels.

Importantly, they also concluded that income-based reading gaps grew over the summer. Middle-class students tended to show improvement in reading skills while lower-income students tended to experience loss. However, they did not find differential summer learning in math, or by gender or race in either subject.

*<https://brook.gs/2vFwdml>*

#### **Slowing the summer slide**

##### **Reading:**

Fortunately, the growing attention to the summer slide has created new opportunities for enrichment. Many communities have added new fun educational programs for kids. Most libraries host some kind of incentivized or structured reading program to encourage reading.

According to Oxford Learning, continuing to read can make a difference: "Studies show that reading four to five books over the summer has a positive impact comparable to summer school enrollment." *<http://bit.ly/2H5sWT1>*

Parents can encourage reading, too, by scheduling regular trips to the public library, bringing books on family outings to the park or beach, reading to young kids regularly, and modeling reading during dedicated quiet time at home.

##### **Technology**

Despite concerns about overuse of technology — specifically cell phones and video games — students need to learn good technology

*(Over)*

skills. And technology tools can make learning more fun. There are many recommended educational tools to build technology skills.

The following apps are recommended by eLearning Industry as “outstanding applications that engage children’s brains and allow them to have fun while they’re learning.”

<https://elearningindustry.com/10-top-educational-apps-for-kids>

**Duolingo:** This effective and fun app offers a variety of languages, and is completely free to download and use.

**DragonBox:** The DragonBox series is an educational game that teaches math fundamentals with fun activities. There are five learning apps for learning math, including algebra and geometry. All five games in the app require up-front payment but don’t have in-app purchase charges.

**Quick Maths:** This app is aimed at making kids familiar with numbers and imparting general math skills for students in grades two to six. It can help students improve and maintain their math while away from the classroom.

**YouTube Kids:** Exclusively made and curated for kids, Youtube Kids offers educational videos and entertainment content to inspire and enhance young minds. This app is free, easy to use and offers family-friendly videos.

**Science360:** This tablet-only app was created by the National Science Foundation. It features advanced science, engineering news images, and videos for children. All content is high-quality and updated every week. It offers a 360-degree view to allow kids to explore 3D images from every angle.

**Crossword Puzzles:** There are a variety of crossword puzzle apps available for kids. These apps are great tools to help students build vocabulary in a fun, engaging way.

**Flow Free:** This simple puzzle game is appealing to kids of any age. There are 2,000 puzzles available for free.

**Spelling Stage:** This spelling app is great for vocabulary development. It includes a wide range of words for preschoolers through adults.

**My Molecularium:** This entertaining educational app offers fun games for high school students to easily understand and learn chemistry concepts related to molecular structure, chemical formulas, and skeletal formulas.

### **Physical Fitness**

Summer fun should include plenty of outside activity. In addition to physical health benefits being active improves memory and concentration. It also reduces symptoms of anxiety and depression. “The national recommendation is that children and adolescents aged 6 to 17 years should have 60 minutes (one hour) or more of physical activity each day of a combination of aerobic, muscle-strengthening or bone-strengthening activity.

[www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/physicalactivity/facts.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/physicalactivity/facts.htm)