



Supporting the Parent



Tips for Shifting from School Year to Summer Break

As the school year draws to a close, you and your family probably view summer break as a well-deserved reprieve. If your child has learning and/or attention problems, it's important to recognize that the shift from school year to summer break (however welcome) represents a transition phase and may pose special challenges for your child.

Regardless of the summer plans you've made, you may want to ease into summer in a way that addresses your needs as well as your child's. Here are some tips to consider:

Tips to Help Parents:

1. **Review the summer plans you've made to date.** Where there are gaps, brainstorm ways to address them, such as parents rotating days off work to stay home with younger kids on unscheduled days.
2. **Post the family's summer schedule.** Mark activities (day camp, vacations, your teenager's work schedule, etc.) on a "family size" calendar posted in a central location. Be sure to note blocks of unscheduled time as well; that way, you can anticipate free time to use as you wish - even if it's just to enjoy a break in the action.
3. **Be prepared to be spontaneous.** Keep a running list of places and people to visit when time permits and the mood strikes. Summer — free from homework and tutors — is a good time to stop by the science museum, bike trail, or concert-in-the-park you can't seem to get to during the school year.
4. **If you and/or your child thrive on routine, build as much of it in to your summer schedule as possible.** Even so, your routine may change every week or so; find ways to prepare for this transition. This may be as simple as mentally rehearsing the new routine (including daily wake-up time and preparation) with your child before the week begins. Remember: Transitions can be hard for parents, too!
5. **Ask other people** (spouse, family members, and neighbors) **for help** shuttling kids to activities and supervising them on their "days off." Trade carpooling and kid-watching duties with other parents in your neighborhood.

(Continued on page 2)



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UPCOMING EVENTS

June 9: 6pm Children with Challenging Behaviors Share Group, Boone Unitarian Universalist (located beside the Playhouse)

June 9: 6pm Families with Medically Fragile Children Share Group, Boone Unitarian Universalist

Call us for more information
about these events.

Tips... Continued

6. **Don't succumb to summer stress!** There is bound to be some bedlam and boredom in any household during the summer. When stress strikes, try to shrug it off and find humor in the situation.

Tips to Help Kids with Learning and/or Attention Problems:

1. **Revamp — but don't eliminate — your child's daily routine.** A daily routine gives most kids with learning or attention problems a sense of structure and security. While certain tasks (like doing homework) can be dropped during the summer, new ones (like packing for daily swim lessons) may be added. For fun, you might loosen up on certain chores during the summer, like designating every Friday as "Don't make the bed" day!
2. **Prepare your child for her scheduled activities.** If possible, visit the locations where he/she will be during day camp or day care in advance. Have your child talk to counselors, caregivers, as well as other kids have enjoyed those same situations and settings.
3. **Have your child contribute to the family calendar.** Together, you can determine key dates (e.g., community pool opens for recreation swim, July Fourth barbecue) and have your child mark these on the calendar.
4. **Involve your child when preparing for family trips and activities.** Depending on his/her age, she can help you map out driving routes or make a list of the clothing and recreational gear the family will need.

Encourage summertime learning. Summer outings may present opportunities for your child to learn about history, geography, and nature. Look for "teachable moments" and encourage him/her to listen, read, take photographs, collect postcards, and keep a journal of his/her adventures. This type of learning can boost the self-esteem of a child who struggles in school.

By Kristin Stanberry, www.schwablearning.org



Cupcake Bouquets

Cupcake Bouquets topped with candy flowers, these desserts drew the girls in like, well, bees to blossoms.

- 1 box of cake mix, any flavor
- Flat-bottomed ice-cream cones
- White frosting
- Large gumdrop disks, such as Sunkist Gourmet Fruit Gems (one 14-ounce bag can decorate 5 cupcakes)

Step 1: Prepare the cake batter according to the directions on the box. Fill the narrow bottom of each ice-cream cone with the batter. Set the cones on a baking sheet and transfer them to the oven, being careful not to tip them over.

Step 2: Bake at 350 degrees for 25 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center of a cupcake comes out clean. Let them cool, then frost the tops.

Step 3: To make each candy flower, cut 6 wedges from the edges of a gumdrop disk and cut a green gumdrop disk into slices for leaves. Press the wedges into the middle of the cut flowers for flower centers, then arrange the candies on top of the frosted cupcakes. One box of cake mix yields 34 cupcakes (or make fewer and use the remaining batter for a small cake).

from www.familyfun.com