

Collecting Our Angels; Nurturing Our Children

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Raising Our Scholar Athletes to Reach Their Dreams



Summer Activity Ideas for working and stay at home moms:

It is that time of the year again when mothers are trying to find and research the different summer camps and tutor time available for their children. Eliminate the words *stress* and *fear* from your mind. Go put on the kettle, start brewing a cup of tea, grab a snack and sit back. Let me help you organize your summer and give you some powerful ideas to create the best summer ever!

The number one thing that has to happen is to create the time to sit down and find out what your child (ren) want to do and what is available. Whether you are working or stay at home during the summer, take time to sit down and discuss their interests in this beginning stage of planning. Finances may have to be discussed if there is a limited amount of money available. It is important to find out what their interests are, what their friends may be doing, and the cost of the activity.

Only Love; No Fear

You are probably telling yourself how important it is to create a fun time since the children have just spent nine months working hard in school. Don't let fear or stress come into the work of scheduling some fun time with their

upcoming summer camps and activities. Remember, there is no mistake to make and any choice that is made will turn out great. Because you are going into this with good intention, there is no need to worry about the outcome.

You may find an activity that your child's friend is interested in, but this may be a good time to introduce new friends. If the friends can't do the camp together, reassure that they will have time with their friend. By speaking to the friend's parents, they can discuss and schedule planning dinners, pool time, and evenings in the near future. When looking for specific camps, remember to keep the interest high in the activity so there will not be boredom or behavior problems occurring. Having this discussion time lets them think about how they want to spend their time.

Meet With Your Kids

Now it's here, the meeting in the living room with all devices off (except for the laptop to look up the camps available online.) When asking your children about interests, spend time reviewing ideas that you have seen in the home. Talk about how you see your child enjoy baking or cooking, creating crafts, or painting. This is a great time to let them know you see them. This will help you connect more with them. What is better than sitting around with your children and learning about all the different things they love doing or thinking about? Nothing. This is a great time to tell them what you did as a kid. Your kids want to know who you are. Give them that opportunity to know a little part of who you are.

If you are available to take your child, there are baking and craft classes at your neighborhood Michael's. A local artist may offer painting classes at their homes. Keep in mind that if you are the type of mom who likes to bake also, set up time where you can run the baking class.

If there aren't ideas showing up about what they like, get the ball rolling by asking them who their favorite person, place, or thing is at that moment. Their favorite place may be a country, state, or national they learned about at school. Their favorite person may be a past US president, or famous aviator they were introduced to from school. Their favorite item may be something new that interests them like a compass, rubric cube, or an ocean animal. Use these ideas during your sit down meeting with your children. Be ready to write down all their ideas, ask questions, and get into their lives.

At this time, have your computer ready on local YMCA websites, community center websites, and local beach or park websites to look at the different camps and activities available during the summer. Remember that there are cut off dates and certain camps and classes fill up quickly, so start your summer conversation soon! If time permits, have them think about what is offered and let them have a few days to mull it over.

Set Rules with Rewards & Consequences

A second meeting should be planned to sign up your child/children for the camp decided on. Having them assist you in signing up online for their camp helps them feel like part of the process. This second meeting has another agenda. Unveil the "Rules of the Summer of 17". Take some time before this meeting and make a list of rules based on what kind of summer you want. If you are a mom who will be home and you are comfortable having your child's friends there, create a list of the rules you want followed. If you want to turn down the usage of devices and computer games, create a list for that setting.

The rules should consist for campers and children at home with eating guidelines such as where they can eat and cleaning up after oneself, behavior between siblings such as fighting, and allotted time on devices and/or television. For those children who attend a camp, their behavior at the activity must be positive or warrants a consequence. Be sure to have rewards ready. Generate a goodie bag for the house for good behavior and catching them having positive behavior. Set up a large reward such as a theme park trip for consistent behavior. Even if a theme park is something already in the works, be sure that your children know they need to work for it. If they know that their trip can be canceled if they show bad behavior, they will be sure to practice making good choices at camp or home.

The dream summer for some moms might be limited devices, getting to know your kids better, and having more quality time together. This shouldn't be a dream but reality and this is how you go about it. In order to accomplish this, three things must be in place. First, have a plan for your children during the day whether home or at a camp. Second, have your rules in place with consequences and rewards tied in. Lastly, use their likes and dislikes list and pull out old style games, hobbies such as coin collecting or making photo albums, ideas of puzzles or making forts, and old school fun

like playing your old records or cassettes depending on the devices you make still have around.

Go Old School

Introduce them to old school video games that you once played. Play an old album you loved and let them experience the album cover and lyrics. Find old style games like Pick-up Sticks, Ker-plunk, LIFE, Trouble, Battleship, or Parcheesi. (Google to find your favorites.) Show them old coins or one of your old photo albums and download pictures to create a family one. The sky's the limit.

As moms, we always want to give our child everything important. Giving them new ideas and actually connecting with them is priceless. Don't worry about not doing something correct or not doing what the other moms are doing. Quite frankly, you would be surprised how many moms don't know what to do and would love to borrow your ideas. Don't worry about what others think. Deep down, it doesn't matter what anyone thinks except your kids.

Tutoring

School work in the summer? Oh, mom?! Come on!! These will be phrases you will hear when it comes to having your children see a tutor or practice multiplication cards. Be ready to calm the savage beasts. Be sure to make it fun, connect their work to the rewards goodie bag, and keep it steady by attaching their bad attitude or incomplete work to a consequence of less device/television time or attending the planned theme park.

Steps To Take For Tutoring

Step one for tutoring should be to set up a time or email with your child's current teacher to discuss what should be practiced and relearned. Discuss specifics that they think your child should work on in order to keep all the wonderful knowledge with her during the summer for the upcoming grade level. For instance, if reading needs work, find out if it is the fluency or comprehension. For math, find out what concepts such as adding/subtracting double digits or three digit numbers, decimals, or fractions. As the middle of July approaches, the standardized test results will be mailed out. Use the outcome information to help the tutor prep for the

tutor lessons. This info will tell you the areas that your child has weaknesses in reading, comprehension, and math.

Step two would be to find a tutor that fits the needs of your child. Ask your teacher for tutor referrals and ask if they could talk to their colleagues about someone they could refer. A good idea may be to find out if other classmates of your child need the same help and create tutor time as a small group. Some tutors allow this kind of teaching especially in reading and math. The children can feed off of each other when listening and comprehending reading and when solving math problems. Watching and learning how others find information in text or solve a math problem is helpful and valuable.

Step three for tutoring should be scheduling the time around your child's fun summer. When setting up the tutor, select times that still let your child breathe and enjoy the summer. Remember, it isn't important to schedule every minute of their day. Let them have time where they can sit and be still. Let your children pick and choose from the old style games, enjoy listening to music, and have fun with friends at the pool or beach.

Instructional websites

Use the internet to help your child learn during the summer. The following websites are great for math, reading, and other subjects.

Khan Academy: This is a great site for parents to help your child in different math concepts. First, create an account as a parent. Next, in the search area, type in the concept and grade level you are looking to use. For instance, type in 4th grade fractions into the search area. Videos are available that teach step by step how to look at a concept and solve problems. The voice of the man who teaches is very soothing. He also teaches and recommends pauses for students during a lesson to take some thinking time. He also offers practice after his lessons. There's a place to ask for help if you get stuck.

Reading A-Z: This reading site is used by teachers in the classroom. Ask your child's teacher for the password that they use at school. Otherwise, you can sign up for a 14 day trial or purchase. Although the cost is approximately \$100, it has books on line where they can do quizzes to practice their comprehension skills.

Read Naturally: This reading program is research based using an initial timed reading, practice questions, re-reading the passage while listening, and a final timed reading all based on their level. The leveled numbers do not coincide with your student's grade level. For example, level 2.0 is not for 2nd grade. Their level is based on their fluency reading of words per minute (wpm) at the time of initial testing. There is a video showing how the program works. If your child shows signs of dyslexia, this is a great program. Students with dyslexia need to continue to practice daily. This program is perfect for that situation.

BrainPop: This program has videos to teach in any area using cartoon characters Tim and Moby. By going to Google, look up Free Stuff BrainPOP and try out a few videos in the areas that are troubling your child. The lessons also come with quizzes to see how much information is being retained by your child. If this is something that your child likes, ask your child's teacher if their school has an account to use. If no account at your school, there is only a \$10+ a month fee. Twenty dollars to help teach your child's subjects at home by using a fun cartoon during the summer is a great deal.

Library Time

Library time is something that every class has once a week at school. It is a time that students look/research books on their interests, select books at their reading level, practice using quiet voices, and read from a book and not an ipad or kindle. Attending different libraries in your area during the summer based on their story time, computer usage, and fun summer activities.

A wonderful way to help your child select a book to read by them, use the Five Finger Rule.

1. Choose a book that you think you will enjoy.
2. Read the second page.
3. Hold up a finger for each word you are not sure of, or do not know.
4. If there are five or more words you did not know, you should choose an easier book.

Have lined paper based on the age of your child/chrome book account on Google: Have student write a main idea and details about the book they read or write a short retell about what they remember or learned. This is something every child has to do in school, but will be more fun base on the book they want based on their interests. Most of all let your child pick out a few easy books or comic book. They need something that they enjoy at their reading level/capability. Let it be fun. Have them create an art project or painting based on their favorite part of the book.

Field Trips

Tie in the rewards of your children sticking to a media time by venturing off to a fun place they enjoy!

Go to: museums, parks, skate parks, aquariums, zoos, animal parks, theme parks based on their interests and your wallet.

(Look into local community centers that offer day trips for students, at a certain age usually 6th grade and up, to go to a local theme park on their own. The cost usually includes bus fare, ticket, and a snack on the bus.)

Now that you are armed with the knowledge, take action! Set up family time to talk, decide where and what everyone wants to do, look up and explore the helpful websites for reading and math, and get everyone on the same page when it comes to rewards & consequences! Most of all enjoy the summer time fun!!