

## SUMMER LOSS

This factsheet provides information about summer loss.

### APPLICABLE TO

All

### KEY POINTS

Summer loss is the phrase used to describe the decline in academic skills and knowledge over the course of the summer months. It is a common finding across numerous studies that children can take the same test before and after summer and they would do less well after

summer. American research on the amount of knowledge and skill lost over the summer can range from between a month and 2.6 months (Cooper, 1996).

Babies, children and young people need ongoing opportunities to learn new skills/information and to practise the things that they can do and have just learnt. For school children and the children who are in term time only day care there is a disruption to their learning over the summer holiday period.

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR ME?

All parents can help their children if they offer regular opportunities for the children to:

- Read and share books
- Go to the library
- Go on visits
- Play with letters and numbers
- Sing songs and rhymes
- Draw and paint
- Play with friends

The summer loss experienced by the children during the summer months is lesser for the children that enjoy some of the activities listed above and have the opportunity to carry on practising their skills and learning new things.

### TOP TIPS

**TO ENCOURAGING READING** – Reading over the summer months helps children to maintain their reading, comprehension and vocabulary skills. Choosing interesting age and stage appropriate books with children and encouragement to read them, both independently and with guidance from family members, reading achievement scores can improve significantly (Kim, 2004).

To fully benefit from, and enjoy reading a book, you first need the blending skills to decode the words accurately and quickly enough to stay focused on the meaning of the text. In psychology, this is referred to as “fluency.” It is therefore important that children are supported to choose books, not only that they are interested in but also that are age and stage appropriate for them. Reading with younger children will help them sustain an interest in books whilst supporting them to blend the sounds to decode the words. To help you decide if the book is at the right level for your child you can ask them to read 100 words from the book. Ask them to raise one finger for each word that is too difficult to read. If the child has more than five fingers up, the book is probably too hard. Children should choose books that interest them, but the ideal outcome is finding the right level where the reading level is challenging but not frustrating (Kim, 2004).



## FOR MAINTAINING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY DURING THE SUMMERTIME.

- Go swimming with your children
- Enrol children on sport activities at your local leisure centre
- Go for a walk in the local area – why not meet friends at a park and have a picnic?
- Play games such as Simon says and get children hopping, skipping and jumping
- Build an obstacle course, time and challenge the children to complete it
- Walk to the local library or museum
- Plan trips to the local zoo/petting farm/ice-cream parlour
- Set a treasure hunt challenge with friends
- See who can fill a small box with the most things whilst on a walk

## WHY NOT:

- Choose an educational app and challenge your child to complete a level a day
- Bake with your child so they can practise their reading, coordination and maths
- Visit a science exhibition or museum
- Visit your local library to use the computers there
- Plan your visits with your children – use the internet to find out how to get there, what time places are open, etc
- Choose a country and find out as much as you can about that country – perhaps you are going on holiday somewhere or there is a football tournament or the Olympics that can inspire you. Can you draw the country's flag? Find out what food grows there? What is the traditional dress and festivals that they might celebrate there?
- Write a shopping list, walk about the shop with the children reading the labels, weighing out and count the food and vegetables you need.
- Have a family games night - play board games with your children – some traditional games such as Monopoly and Scrabble will help your children with their maths and literacy.
- Challenge children to keep a diary over the summertime – they could write about where they have been, what they have done, draw pictures of where they have been, take photos and print them out, plan what they would like to do on certain days, menu planning – the list could be almost endless.

## REFERENCES

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