

Counselor's Corner

Brain Drain and Summer Slide

Hello Parents! **Please take my survey here.** [Click here to begin.](#)

Summer is here and our kids are certainly ready for it. We all look forward to a break from after our long winter and over-structured days. Try to remember that during summer months, our kids still need structure. It's important to keep some routines during the summer months. This will help with the transition back to school in September.

Common sense tells us not to let our brains take too much of a break. You've heard, "use it or lose it." It is vital to keep our kids' minds engaged every day. Reading, math facts, writing, creating, painting, field trips all help keep our minds from "sliding." Read street signs while driving, have your children help you shop (What is the best price for this item?) ask them to help with baking and measuring, even draw a schematic of your home for our future architects. Invent, plan, and build.

According to a study in [The New York Times](#) for every summer break, a student loses one month of learning in math and reading per year, also called the summer slide. Summer slide" refers to the significant loss of learning most kids experience over summer break. More troubling: The loss accumulates each year and disproportionately affects low-income students — they lose two months of reading skills as compared to one month for peers from higher-income homes.

Another area that can contribute to this slide is too much screen time which is really not an activity, but a **passivity**. It halts the growth process in our young kids with very devastating effects. There is now much more research explaining that prolonged screen-time usage is highly addictive and has been called "digital heroin."
<http://nypost.com/2016/12/17/kids-turn-violent-as-parents-battle-digital-heroin-addiction/>

Let's be aware of what our children are doing.

Beginning June 22nd, it will now be parent's time to step up and teach. Here are some ideas:

Run errands together

Use these moments as an opportunity for learning, especially at the grocery store. They can weigh produce, compare products by pricing, learn why some things are so expensive.

Don't forget the Seattle Hill Elementary School Library and the Snohomish and Mill Creek Libraries

Our school library will be open this summer Tuesdays from 9:30 – 11:30. Check out a book or bring your own device and we'll help you download an audiobook or ebook. Open July 2 through August 20.

Students must be accompanied by an adult.

It's not just reading on their own that helps kids develop great reading skills; listening to books also supports learning in a variety of ways. Listen to audiobooks during road trips or driving to each daily adventure. Make reading aloud to your kids a priority. Read to them at bedtime or other downtimes. Reward older kids for reading to younger kids.

Try something new

Support lemonade stands, bake sales, yard sales, backyard campouts, museum visits and take road trips. Pricing and counting cash are math. Museum visits and road trips often incorporate geography, history and art. Encourage kids to do the planning to carry out their creative ideas without you, as much as possible. Research shows they'll be happier and more self-motivated if you're out of the way.

Write it out

Instead of arguing with your kids, I have them make their case in a persuasive essay. Let them know you'll be more willing to consider their request if they can write why they want such as host a backyard campout or go shopping. They can write and illustrate their own books about what they're doing during the summer, keep a daily journal or have them create a travel log for family trips. This includes calculating distances and jotting down impressions.

Have a great summer, including eating double-decker ice cream cones, and make those life-long memories. I look forward to seeing you at for our "Back to School Meet and Greet" event.

Fondly,
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