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### How to get the most of Summer Break

It is crazy to think that summer break is here for most of us, and a few schools are just finishing up and it will be here for them before we know it! Although summer break can be crazy for some families, the best time of the year for other families, or boring for a few families due to no school, there are ways to make the most of summer break for everyone. The Child Mind Institute has ways I covered below to help summer break be fun, educational, and engaging for kids, all while keeping the stress low for parents.

Although some kids groan during morning wake up calls before school in the mornings, the routine that school gives kids helps them stay focused which leads to better behavior. During the summer it is important to maintain a schedule that works for parents and the kids. It is difficult to duplicate the structure that school provides, but daily schedules, consistent mealtimes, and bedtimes help kids be more comfortable and cooperative during the day.

Along with structure, schools provide plans for kids, so it is important during the summer to make plans and activities as early as possible. This could mean anything from planning the week out on Monday, to planning the month out ahead of time.

The weather during the summer is the best so it is important to take children outdoors when able! Physical activity is good for everyone's mind, body, and spirit, especially for those kids with that extra energy to burn. Although screens can be a good tool at times, it is important to find outdoor activities that engages kids in a different way than their screens can.

Lastly, work with what your child likes to do and is good at! If able, sign up your kids for camps that they are interested in or will allow them grow during the week. If you can't sign them up for any camps, plan activities and adventures that they show interest in and will have fun doing.

There are many resources online for activities to do with your children during the summer and a great one with affordable, engaging, and doable activities, is on the national 4-H website. <https://4-h.org/about/4-h-at-home/#view-all-activities> has many different activities with learning components to do with kids at home. There are over 200 activities split into 25 different categories to pick from. Activities range from DIY drawstring bags, baking fun recipes, bee activities, to space exploration fun. Some activities can be done outdoors while others can be done inside for the rainy summer days.

4-H offers more resources for families than at home activities for the summer! Enroll in 4-H by June 15<sup>th</sup> to join more of the fun!

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