



BRINGING THE LESSONS HOME *for Families and Caregivers*



THE BIG PICTURE: WHY SUMMER BREAK MATTERS

Summer isn't just a pause from school, it's a chance for children to grow in ways the classroom doesn't always allow. Kids ages 4–9 thrive when they have time to explore, play, and follow their interests at their own pace. This unstructured time helps children **build independence, strengthen social skills, develop creativity, recharge emotionally, and practice problem-solving** through play.

Think of summer as a reset button that prepares children for the next school year. Whether your kids are in summer camp, in childcare, or home with a parent or caregiver, try to find some time for unstructured fun summer activities that support "The Big Picture".

EXPLORE & DISCOVER

- Take a trip to the beach! The beach offers hours of fun and exploration! Build sandcastles, collect interesting rocks, compare waves, play a game or go for a walk!
- Visit a local nature trail or park. Enjoy being outside, look for animal tracks, listen/feed birds.
- Go on a "cloud-spotting" picnic! Lie on a blanket and guess shapes in the sky
- Create a backyard or playground bug hunt. Use a magnifying glass to observe insects up close.

LEARN THROUGH EVERYDAY MOMENTS

- Tap into your local library for summer events!
- Cook a simple recipe and practice measuring, mixing, and tasting!
- Plant a small garden or a container plant. Observe growth and talk about what plants need.

MOVE & PLAY

- Create your own obstacle course! Grab some friends and make it a friendly competition.
- Water play day. Set up sprinklers, buckets, sponges, or cups for endless fun
- Bike or scooter adventures! Create obstacle courses, practice safety skills on the sidewalk and build confidence!

Summer break is a season of possibilities! With a balance of play, gentle structure, and meaningful connection, young children can enjoy a summer that supports their growth in every way, socially, emotionally, and academically. You don't need a perfect plan or a lot of free time. You just need moments of joy, curiosity, and togetherness. Those are the memories that last.