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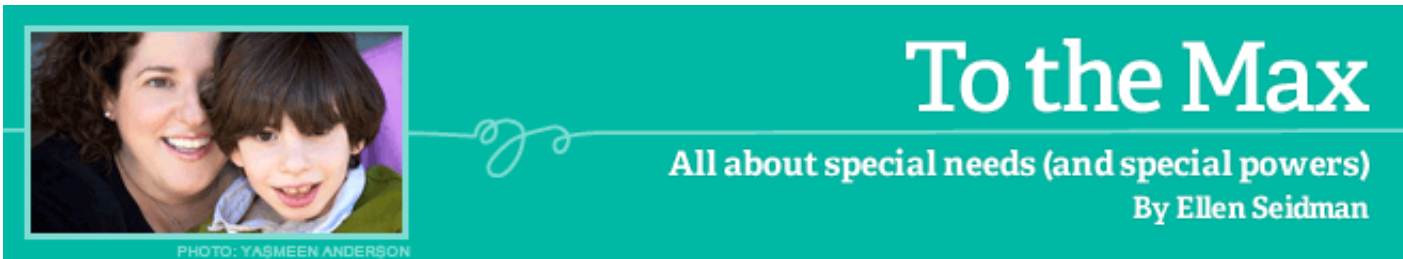
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Parents Blogs To The Max 35 Fun Ways To Beat Summer Learning Loss



# 35 Fun Ways To Beat Summer Learning Loss

July 8, 2014 at 8:30 am , by Ellen Seidman

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Summer's the time for carefree fun. Unfortunately, it's also learning slide season; research shows that students lose academic ground when they are out of school for extended periods. But there are excellent ways to avoid mind meltdown while having a really great time with your kids. Diane Levin, professor of Early Childhood Education at Wheelock College in Boston and founder of the non-profit TRUCE (Teachers Resisting Unhealthy Children's Entertainment) and her team put together this great list of brain-boosting activities to inspire kids and parents alike.

## Field Trip Fun!

**Take a neighborhood walk:** Look for shapes and patterns in sidewalks and buildings; read signs along the way.

**Library time:** Sign up for special events such as puppet shows and other free summer programs.

**Play grocery store games:** Name and classify types of food (fruits, vegetables, etc.), compare prices and weights and read labels.

**See the park in a new way:** Look carefully at the different kinds of leaves, trees, birds; download a guide or two before you go.

## Kitchen Fun!

**Ice it up:** Make cubes, pops and Jell-O; measure and see how long it takes for liquid to turn solid.

**Be a chef:** Create your own summer recipes cookbook; add a cover, dedication page and author bio.

**Erupt a volcano!** Put a cup of warm water into a clear plastic container so it's about two-thirds full. Add a few drops of food coloring, then five drops of liquid dishwashing soap and 2 tablespoons baking soda. Slowly pour vinegar into the container and watch the eruption!

**Make some butter, too:** Put a cup of heavy cream in a jar. Take turns shaking it until it becomes butter (in about 20 minutes). Turn on upbeat music to shake to. As the butter begins to form, drain off the liquid. Add a dash of salt for taste and as a preservative. Spread butter on toast or something else. Enjoy!

## Reading Fun!

**Hit yard and garage sales:** Visit a few on a weekend day and let your child pick up books.

**Start a book club:** Create a kid one with a few friends.

**Be dramatic:** Draw or paint pictures of made-up stories—or write and illustrate a story about what happens next after a favorite story ends.

**Become authors:** Write and illustrate a summer book together about something your child has done or wants to do, or a made-up activity.

**Create a family summer reading chart:** As each family member reads a book (adults, too!), enter it on the chart. This can model parents' love of reading and for kids to see their parents read too.

**Read books about your kids' summer activities:** If they play t-ball, find books about the game. When the family goes swimming, read books about trips to the pool or beach. If you visit a zoo, read books about zoos and compare the animals in the books to the ones you actually saw at the zoo. The possibilities are endless!

## Math Fun!

**Sort it out:** Group buttons, beads, shells, pebbles or pine cones by color, size, shape and texture.

**Roll the dice:** Play number games with dice to add, subtract, multiply, and divide.

**Make change:** Trade 10 pennies for a dime, for instance, and 10 dimes for a dollar. You could also turn a playroom into a "store" and use play money to further help kids learn about money value.

**Create a magazine puzzle:** Have your child cut up a picture from an old magazine and rebuild the picture; this helps kids grasp part/whole relationships, planning and problem solving.

**Play time games:** Try Beat The Clock. Ask your child, "Can you hula hoop for two minutes before the clock's seconds hand goes around twice? "How many jumping jacks can you do in three minutes?"

**Do a life-size board game:** Draw your own giant game board on the sidewalk or driveway with chalk. Make it any shape (circle, square, squiggly) and length, depending on the ages of children (do fewer squares for younger children). Try adding "Lose a turn" or "Go back five spaces" squares. Family members are the "pieces." Make a

giant die out of a cardboard box. Players roll the die and move through the squares accordingly. First to make it to the final square wins!

**Sketch it out:** Before a child builds their own creation out of blocks or Legos, or even boxes and straws, ask them to create a blueprint sketch for their creations.

**Do some car math:** When you're driving, create story problems for your child to solve. For example: "Two families decided to meet at the beach. One family had a mom, a dad, and two kids. The other family had: a mom, a dad, and three kids. How many people met at the beach? How many kids? How many grown-ups?" Or: "Six kids were playing kickball. Two kids had to go home for dinner. How many kids were left to play?"

**Sell lemonade:** Running a stand provides many opportunities to use math skills, including buying supplies, whipping up the lemonade and making change.

## Traveling Fun!

**Have an entertainment go-bag:** Include pens, markers, crayons, stickers, cards, dice, books, magazines, word searches, riddle books and comic books.

**Look at maps together:** Pinpoint the location to where you are driving. Have your child share destinations where she'd like to go.

**Play travel sign games:** One classic one is to find words in ABC order.

## Science Fun!

**Take another look:** Get out the magnifying glass, measuring tape, tweezers and mirrors to closely look at ants, spider webs, worms, rocks and puddles. (Just be careful not to harm any living thing).

**Go down a ramp:** Roll toy cars or balls down ramps made of cardboard or wood to see how far or how fast they go depending on the tilt and the toy.

**See how they grow:** Use different size containers to water plants; look at the roots, stem, petals and blossoms together; draw pictures and label them; find seeds outside or in the kitchen.

**Sink it, or float it:** Fill a container or sink with water and see which items around the house or outdoors sink or float; make predictions to test. Build little boats out of Popsicle sticks or foil. Talk about why things do or don't sink or float.

**Do a magnet scavenger hunt:** Use a magnet to see which items around the house get pulled by the magnet. Talk about why.

**Or try an outside treasure hunt:** Hide a bunch of objects outside; draw a map or write clues to help kids find the treasures.

## Writing Fun!

**Create cards:** Make thank-you cards, get well cards, party invites or stationary an older sibling can use in sleepaway camp.

**Label it:** Create labels or signs with big letters for games, toys and books around the house.

**Find a summer pen pal:** Join forces with a friend or relative who lives far away. Kids used to electronics might get a kick out of sending letters via snail mail.

Image of [girl at lemonade stand](#) via Shutterstock

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**Ellen Seidman** writes [Love That Max](#), a blog about raising kids with special needs who kick butt. It ranks #20 in Babble's list of Top 50 Mom Blogs, and has been featured on AOL, The Motherlode, The Happiness Project, and many other websites. [Read Full Bio](#)



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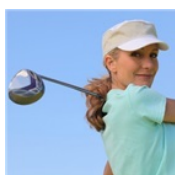
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