



# Pointers For Parents

## Keep Kids Busy With A Summertime PLAYlist

(NAPSA)—When school's out, it's up to parents and caregivers to keep kids busy. Instead of waiting to hear the dreaded "I'm bored," families can be prepared with fun activities to ensure children are playing and learning all vacation long.

According to experts at *The Genius of Play*<sup>™</sup>, a national movement to encourage more play in children's lives, research shows that play is not only critical to healthy child development—it's an important teaching tool. Through play, kids build physical skills, improve cognitive abilities, learn communication and social skills, process and express emotions, and increase creativity.

Meredith Sinclair, author and *The Genius of Play* Ambassador, suggests writing activities on popsicle sticks and placing them in a play jar to create a PLAYlist of fun ideas. Whenever children are bored or need inspiration, encourage them to select from the play jar to stir up their creativity.

To help get your PLAYlist started, Sinclair recommends the following activities:

- **Grow a garden**—A fun, educational way to let kids get dirty is by having them start their very own vegetable garden. They'll love planting the seeds to watch them grow. They'll also be learning a sense of responsibility and getting a confidence boost by being proud of what has blossomed under their care.

- **Camping**—No need to go far. Gather all the camping essentials, such as flashlights, sleeping bags, s'more ingredients and a pop-up tent, head to the living room or the backyard and set up camp for the night.



**Encourage your kids to express themselves with arts and crafts when school is out.**

- **Rock art**—Whether used as decorations or to leave kind messages around the neighborhood, rock art is a trendy and easy craft. Have kids collect rocks of various shapes and sizes, and once the rocks are clean, use acrylic paint to decorate them.

- **Make a movie**—Nurture your children's inner filmmakers by encouraging them to create their own movie using a smartphone/tablet, some of their toys to play the characters and crafts for scenery. Once the movie is finished, gather the family and some popcorn to have a viewing party and admire your children's creativity.

- **DIY T-shirts**—Have children play clothing designer for the day. Let them personalize a T-shirt with craft supplies such as tie-dye, puff paints, sequins, iron-on patches and anything else they might like.

More play ideas, expert advice and other play resources are available at [TheGeniusofPlay.org](http://TheGeniusofPlay.org). Follow @GeniusOfPlay on Facebook and Instagram for even further play inspiration.