

POINTERS FOR PARENTS

Kids Don't Have To Take A Vacation From Learning

(NAPSA)—Even when school doors are closed, the window for learning can stay open. Visiting the beach, a park or a campground doesn't mean your children have to take a vacation from learning.

Here are some tips and suggestions from the experts at Kumon Math and Reading Centers on how to make learning fun this summer.

- Make fun part of learning. For example, if your family goes to the beach, talk with your children about the creatures of the ocean—tales of starfish and turtles will dazzle them.

Turn your walk on the beach into a fact-finding mission—gather and count shells, discuss the changes in sand as it gets wet from the waves or watch how the water gradually moves back and forth with the tide.

- As you visit different destinations, bring books that pertain to your travels. You can read from your local library's summer reading list.

- You can count on summer sports. While your children are thinking about kickball, baseball and soccer, they can also think about numbers.

Encourage your children to help you keep score at games they play in or watch. This will keep their brainpower at work, helping them to add and subtract numbers throughout the summer.

And if you do any mixing of lemonade or cool onion dips as a snack, make sure you take the opportunity to teach about fractions—from $1/2$ a teaspoon, a cup or whatever the recipe calls for.

- Keep a journal. Encourage your children to keep a journal of their summer adventures. This can be beneficial on several fronts: It



With a little bit of planning, everyday activities such as taking a walk or cooking can help to keep children's learning skills sharp.

provides great letter-writing practice, creates opportunities to talk about experiences and can also be brought to school later to share with classmates and teachers.

- Plant a garden. Creating a vegetable or flower garden can be a wonderful way for children to get involved in nature—literally at the ground level. Talk with your children about the process—how and why flowers and vegetables grow, the colors and names of different varieties, what they taste or smell like.

For younger children, the book "The Gardener" illustrates how a little girl can grow seeds and bulbs given by her grandmother—even though she lives in the city. Or you could read "The Very Hungry Caterpillar" and then go looking for a caterpillar.

Keeping your kids' thinking caps on all summer can help to make September and a return to school days a smoother experience.

Kumon Math and Reading Centers is an after-school supplemental education program. For more information about Kumon, parents can call 1-800-ABC-MATH or visit www.kumon.com.