

Education News & Notes

Vacation Reading: Helping Your Child Get Ahead

(NAPSA)—A good book is more than just something to pass the time. For schoolchildren, it can be a portal to distant lands or ancient history. And for their parents, it can be an important springboard for a dive into learning. As such, it's essential that parents encourage their youngsters to read—even when they're on vacation.

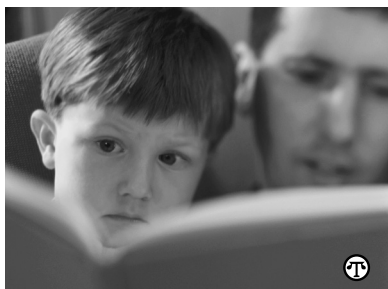
According to the Johns Hopkins University Center for Summer Learning, "research demonstrates that all students experience significant learning losses in procedural and factual knowledge during the summer months."

Preventing this "loss of learning" can be as simple as having your child pick up a book—or five. Reading during vacations actually enhances reading ability in an elementary school child, so he or she can head back to school with better reading and writing skills.

Here are a few tips from Mary Mokris, Ph.D., of Kumon Math & Reading Centers, on how to get and keep your kids interested in reading:

- **Let children read what they like.** When they enjoy the subjects, children are more likely to discover the joy of reading—and read more on their own. Allow your child to experience the wonder of reading a fantasy or science fiction story, or the thrill of feeling as if he or she is at a Revolutionary War battle—or on a pirate ship. Some children may like non-fiction and may want to read about the universe, science or different cultures in foreign lands.

- **Make time for reading aloud.** It helps young preschoolers develop a sense for the rhythm and pattern of language. Read aloud as often as you and your child can.



Fostering an interest in reading during the summer can pay dividends during the school year—and throughout the child's life.

- **A better listener is a better learner.** Read slowly enough to allow your child the time to picture the story in her mind. Reading aloud builds listening skills. Think about it: Most of the time during your child's school day is spent listening.

- **Vary the subject matter.** Mix it up, both in the type and length of the books you read. Reading above your child's reading level on occasion can motivate a child's love of learning. It also helps to build vocabulary.

- **Some children just can't sit still.** Let him color or play with a favorite toy as you read. Your child will still be listening and learning.

- **Talk about what you are reading.** Foster your child's curiosity and answer questions to make the entire process more enjoyable. It's okay to make fun of pictures or talk about words that sound silly.

Vacation reading can be fun, but it can also be one of the best investments you make in the future of your child. To learn more about Kumon's reading program, visit www.kumon.com.