

Post Adoption Resource Center Newsletter Oakland County

May 2013

Summer's Here, Now What?

School's out for the summer! The sun is shining, the temperatures are rising, the kids are outside playing, and mom and dad are inside panicking. Many parents have the thought, "*What are we going to do with these kids when school let's out, they are already driving me crazy!*" Well stop panicking, this issue of the PARC Newsletter is dedicated to getting parents (and the kids) ready for the excitement, heat, and oftentimes boredom that comes with those few glorious months of the year. To get us started here are a list of 100 free or low cost activities that you and the children could do over the summer to keep those active minds occupied.

1. Go to the library, check out books, and read!

2. Participate in story time or craft times that many libraries offer.

3. Have a picnic at a local park

4. Take a field trip.

5. Visit a fire department.

6. Play in the water- get creative and make games with the water. For example, put coloring in water and stretch paper across the fence. Then fill up squirt guns with the colored water and use them to paint the paper- it's like painting with water colors.

7. Build a fort.

8. Take a nature walk.

9. Take an alphabet tour- use a camera or a journal and take pictures of or note the different things you see that begin with the letters of the alphabet- the challenge is not quitting until after you've found something that starts with each letter!

10. Check out free days at local museums.

11. Make homemade ice cream, popsicles, or smoothies.

12. Go on a scavenger hunt.

13. Host a neighborhood carnival (bean bag toss, egg on a spoon, etc). Each neighbor can host a game/activity and bring a snack.

14. Go to an outdoor concert (many cities offer free concerts or even movie nights!)

15. Check out your local movie theatre for free summer movies.

16. Go to the beach.

17. Check out your local hardware store- many have free kids clubs.

18. Cook with your kids.

19. Host a baking party- have each mom bring a few ingredients and spend the day making cookies.

20. Teach your kids how to play frisbee golf.

21. Go fly a kite.

22. Complete a sewing project together.

23. Make sock puppets.

24. Go outside for reading time.

25. Make homemade bubbles.

26. Hide mini army men or ani-

mals in a sand pit and have the kids try to find them all.

27. Play dress up.

28. Have a tea party.

29. Make an obstacle course in your back yard.

30. Play Jacks.

31. Go Fishing.

32. Take a bike ride.

33. Camp in the backyard.

34. Draw with chalk.

35. Visit a local state park.

36. Go bowling (a lot of alleys offer students free bowling over the summer).

37. Plant a garden using seeds from your vegetables/fruits.

38. Tour local historic sites.

39. Make a star gazing map.

40. Teach the kids to knit.

41. Check out a local farm.

42. Set up a lemonade stand.

43. Set up hotwheels races in the driveway.

44. Have a LEGO building contest.

45. Make a doll.

46. Hunt for animal tracks.

47. Have a dress up party.

48. Learn bird calls.

49. Use magazines and make mosaics.

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We Hope you enjoy this edition of the PARC Newsletter. For more ideas and/or informaton on what to do to keep your children busy during the summer please feel free to contact us at 248-410-0727 or visit www.parcokland-orchards.org.



Free/Low Cost Summer Activities Continued...



50. Make a craft project.
51. Tour a factory.
52. Make a musical instrument and create a home band.
53. Make tie-die shirts.
54. Take a picnic to a family member- they'll appreciate it.
55. Make a tent in the living room.
56. Go to an Arboretum.
57. Make a bird feeder out of pine cones and peanut butter.
58. Paint with fruit and veggies.
59. Play charades.
60. Have "bored" game day.
61. Walk your neighbors dog.
62. Blow up diet coke with mentos (ensure parent's supervision).
63. Make silhouettes.
64. Check out local VBS offerings.
65. Learn/Go Orienteering.
66. Make a compass.
67. Gather friends and have a clean the park day.
68. Sculpt with home made salt clay.
69. Collect seashells.
70. Play "I Spy."
71. Go to a farmers' market.
72. Tour a local restaurant.
73. Check for local summer festivals.
74. Make fun school related activities ex. Flash cards.
75. Learn to play street games.
76. Make Taffy.
77. Make a checker board and your own checkers- then play for a bit.
78. Make your own board games.
79. Make a Milk Carton Boat.
80. Have a Christmas in July party with all presents being donated to a local food pantry or shelter.
81. Participate in a free activity at Bass Pro Shop.
82. Call up the Tigers and ask about free tickets for kids.
83. Take a trip to the state capitol.
84. Paint pet rocks.
85. Plan a theme week.
86. Volunteer at a local charity.
87. Have a pajama day.
88. Color
89. Make a Windchime.
90. Write a poem.
91. Do a toy swap.
92. Play school.
93. Make paper dolls.
94. Travel around the world (with your meals- scones for breakfast, Chinese for lunch, pasta for dinner).
95. Trade kids with another parent.
96. Play a sport.
97. Make Slime.
98. Make glowing fireflies.
99. Make a sandcastle.
100. Take an art lesson.

Whew! Who knew there were so many things to do, looks like now there are no excuses for summer boredom! For more ideas or for a list of free/low cost activities in your area please check out our website at www.parkoakland-orchards.org. *Information adapted from *Digital Reflections 100 Free Things To Do With Your Kids This Summer*. June 17, 2009.



What About the Teens?

Yeah, yeah, yeah, we know what you are thinking, the list above is nice for the little ones, but what about the teenagers who just get bored . Well here are some ideas for them as well.

1. It is important to make sure teens are involved in at least one community activity at all times. Sports and clubs can help teens in many ways. Teens can make friends with teammates/club members who have the same interests and these sorts of activities help teens to set and achieve personal goals.

2. Encourage your teen to get a part time job; it will teach your teen responsibility, money management, and the value of hard work.

3. Get your teen to volunteer; it will help them see that there are many who are worse off than they are and will help them



to feel thankful for what they have.

4. Allow your teen to have down time. Teens do not need structured activities at all time and it is important for them to unwind and relax to help them prepare for the next school year. This down time affords teenagers the opportunity to just be kids, to watch a movie, take a nap, do some of things that their school year regimen does not always allow. The ideas in this section have been adapted from the article *Ideas to Get Rid of Teen*

What About the Teens Continued...

Boredom by Valerie Tandoi, eHow Contributor.

In continuation of our discussion about what to do with teens during the summer, there are some important concerns related to parenting teenagers that are brought more to life during the summer months. Rod Moser, PA, PhD a contributing author on Web MD points out that drinking, drug use, and sexual relations highly increase in teens during the summer, oftentimes due to an increase in freedom, lack of responsibility, and sometimes minimal supervision if there are not parents in the home for lengthy periods of time throughout the day. Thus, Dr. Moser reminds parents of these important points:

1. Do not relax the rules in the summer
2. Make consequences clear- write them down and get your teenager to sign it, seal the bond of trust with a hug.
3. Supervise your kids- your teenagers have plenty of friends, you need to be their parent. Be prepared and expect to be unpopular from time to time.
4. Openly discuss alcohol use and abuse- make it clear that teenage drinking is illegal and dangerous. Also, remember that as parent you are always being watched so if you drink at home, do so responsibly and count your beers, lock up your liquor, and make sure your vodka hasn't mysteriously changed to water.
5. Ask questions and stay involved- teenagers need and deserve a certain amount of privacy in their lives, but that doesn't mean that parents should stop parenting.
6. Check and double check teenage party plans- talk to those supervising parents.
7. Make sure your rules are not ambiguous- teenagers are famous for being vague or changing plans at the last minute. If there is a loophole in the rules a teenager will jump through it.
8. If you are going out of town do not

leave teens unsupervised- even responsible teenagers get into trouble when the supervisory distance increases.

9. Follow through with consequences- your primary mission is to keep your children safe and on the right road to responsible adulthood.

Richard Lerner is a contributing author on Education.Com and is the author of *The Good Teen: Rescuing Adolescence* from the Myth of the Storm and Stress Years. Mr. Lerner talks more candidly about some of the difficult issues that are at the forefront of parenting teenagers and some of the issues that seem more visible during the summer months.

In regards to having sexual relationships, Mr. Lerner says most teenagers are going to have sex, but "parents need to be upfront about what your values are so they can do it safely." "Safety," Lerner says "is key." As a parent you can help your teen avoid situations that might encourage or lead to sexual behaviors (for example co-ed sleep overs). Ultimately your goal is to keep your teen informed about risks and safety measures. Trying to forbid your teen from having sex could lead to teens rebelling and practicing unsafe sex.

Related to curfews, Mr. Lerner draws attention to the fact that some communities have an enforced curfew. Consequently, if there is a curfew that naturally becomes the child's curfew no ifs, ands, or buts. Additionally, Mr. Lerner says, "families need to establish curfews that mesh with their lifestyles. Thus, if you don't want to be up at 2:00 AM worrying about where your teen is, then don't make that their curfew. A good idea is to negotiate and allow teens to stay out a little later during the summer, but you don't want to agree to a curfew that doesn't fit your value system." It's also a good idea to discuss the concept of not speeding through the streets at 11:55 to meet a midnight curfew. Talk with your teens about leaving enough time so they don't

need to speed or share with them that you'd rather



they be five minutes late then get in an accident on the way home.

Lerner also talks about sleepovers, which is a common activity for teenagers during the summer. Mr. Lerner says, "sleepovers need to be supervised and you need to make sure that the other parents are there and they agree with your values. You don't have sleepovers where the parents don't care if the kids get into the liquor cabinet."

Related to drug and alcohol use, Mr. Lerner says, "summertime often means extended curfews and freedom, and there's good reason to enter the summer in a dialogue about these issues." Amelia Arria, Director of the Center on Young Adult Health and Development at the University of Maryland says, "having open discussions with your teen about drinking and drugs is the most important thing you can do. Parents need to realize that they have very powerful influences over kids' behaviors," Arria says, "regardless of the kids' ages- and even if they know that their children have already had their first drink."

In summation, the summer time can bring on as many stresses for parents as it can feelings of joy for the children. As can be seen a resounding theme throughout this section is communication. Communicate with your teen, their friends, their friends parents and anybody else to ensure that you feel comfortable and that your child is safe. For more information related to parenting teens, please feel free to call us at 248-410-0727 or visit our



May 2013



Orchards

CHILDREN'S SERVICES



Many parents are concerned about keeping their children's minds sharp over the summer. Here is a list of some summer reading suggestions, as well as some other tips for keeping your child in education mode even while they enjoy those warm summer days.

Haisln Recommended Reading List 2013 (note: these are only some of the books on Haisln's lists)

Pre-K through Kindergarten: Giraffes Can't Dance by Giles Andreae, The Sun Is My Favorite Star by Frank Asch, Extra Yarn by Mac Barnett, Brave Squish Rabbit by Katherine Battersby, Forever Friends by Carin Berger, Seasons by Blexbolex, Plant a Little Seed by Bonnie Christensen, Llama Llama Time to Share by Anna Dewdney, and In the Wild by David Elliott

Grades 1 and 2: The Jungle Grapevine by Alex Beard, Rabbit and Robot: The Sleepover by Cece Bell, The Astonishing Secret of Awesome Man by Michael Chabon, Grace for President by Kelly S. DiPucchio, Bella and Bean by Rebecca Kai Dotlich, Noah Webster and His Words by Jeri Chase Ferris, Let's Do Nothing by Tony Fucile, and Bad Dog, Marley by John Grogan.

Grades 3 and 4: Look to the Stars by Buzz Aldrin, Little Dog Lost by Marion Dane Bauer, The Magical Ms. Plum by Bonny Becker, The Case of the School Ghost by Dori Hillestad Butler, The Mouse and the Motorcycle by Beverly Cleary, How to Train Your Dragon by Cressida Cowell, Charlie and the Chocolate Factory by Roald Dahl, and Sophie Hartley on Strike by Stephanie Greene.

Grade 5: The Underneath by Kathi Appelt, Materpiece by Elise Broach, Al Capone Shines My Shoes by Gennifer Choldenko, Crunch by Leslie Connor, The Magnificent Twelve, Book One: The Call by Michael Grant, Rapunzel's Revenge by Shannon Hale, True (...Sort of) by Katherine Hannigan, Ghost Dog Secrets by Peg Kehret, and Also Known as Harper by Ann Leal.

Grade 6: The Seer of Shadows by Avi, Close to Famous by Joan Bauer, A Thousand Never Evers by Shana Burg, Will at the Battle of Gettysburg 1863 by Laurie R. King, Powerless by Matthew Cody, Waiting for Norma by Leslie Connor, The Great Unexpected by Sharon Creech, Tropical Secrets: Holocaust Refugees in Cuba by Margarita Engle, and The Outcasts by John Flanagan.

Grades 7 and 8: Enclave by Ann Agurre, The Keepers' Tattoo by Gill Arbuthnott, The Peculiar by Stefan Bachmann, A Time of Miracles by Ann-Laure Bondoux, The Girl of Fire and Thorns by Rae Carson, The Brain Finds a Leg by Martin Chatterton, Total Tragedy of a Girl Name Halet by Erin Dionne, Planet Middle School by Nikki Grimes, and After Ever After by Jordan Sonnenblick.

Grades 9 and 10: The Darkest Minds by Alexandra Bracken, Thirteen Reason Why: A Novel, by Jay Asher, Through Her Eyes by Jenner Archer, Hate List by Jennifer Brown, Bunheads by Sophie Flack, Beautiful Creatures by Kami Garcia and Margaret Stohl, Welding With Children by Tim Gautreaux, If We Survive by Andrew Klavan, and The Catcher in the Rye by J. D. Salinger.

Grades 11 and 12: The Zookeeper's Wife: A War Story by Diane Ackerman, Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen, Caleb's Crossing by Geraldine Brooks, Dante's Divine Comedy by Seymour Chwast, The Passage by Justin Cronin, Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close by Jonathan Safran Foer, City of Veils by Zoe Ferraris, and Alys, Always: A Novel by Harriet Lane.

Aside from reading, children's minds can be assisted during the summer from letting them cook, playing games with the family, doing arts and craft projects, and visiting places that will spark an interest in something culturally or historically relevant. For a complete list of the summer reading suggestions or for more tips of how to keep your child's mind active during the summer, please do not hesitate to call us. We hope you've enjoyed this issue of the PARC Newsletter!