

Learning Doesn't Take Vacation

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School's out for summer, but the chance to learn goes on--not just for students but for parents, too. The District's Parent Academy has activities throughout the community and resources online to keep your kids learning, and to help you help them do it.

Kids need time off, but long summer vacations can pose risks, with students sometimes losing ground gained during the school year.

According to the Center for Summer Learning at Johns Hopkins University, "To succeed in school and life, children and young adults need ongoing opportunities to learn and practice essential skills. This is especially true during the summer months... When the school doors close, many children struggle to access educational opportunities..."

More than 100 years of research shows summer learning loss leads many students to score lower on standardized tests at the end of summer vacation than they do on the same tests at the beginning of the summer. Most students lose about two months of grade level equivalency in mathematical computation skills over the summer months. Low-income students also lose more than two months in reading achievement, despite the fact that their middle-class peers make slight gains. To view the Center for Summer Learning's fact sheet, [click here](#).

Another great resource is [The Parent Academy](#). More than 120,000 parents have attended Parent Academy workshops and family learning events since the Academy's inception in 2005. Now is a good time for your family to join them and have fun while continuing to learn throughout the summer.

For Students

Tumble Book Library: Free online books in English, Spanish, and French for readers of all ages. Call The Parent Academy offices at 305-995-2680 for a username and password.

Destination Success Software: Download free math, science, and reading software from Riverdeep. Your child's student ID number serves as username and password.

District Summer Reading List: One of the best ways for children to keep learning over the summer is to keep reading. Click the "Summer Reading List" link for recommended books and resources, including logs for students in pre-kindergarten through 5th-grade.

For Parents

Classes throughout the Community: Whether it's tips on helping your child with homework or how to better manage your family finances, The Parent Academy has courses to help you help your child and your whole family. Click the "Class Directory" link for more information.

Online Resources: Click the "Helpful Resources" link for math support, reading tips, FCAT information, and a host of learning activities.

For the Family

Family Learning Events: From story-telling to lively outings to cultural and educational institutions such as the Historical Museum of Southern Florida and the Miami Children's Museum, The Parent Academy hosts frequent opportunities for children and parents to learn together, and to have fun doing it. Click the "Upcoming Events" link for more information.

This article was written by Dr. Rudolph F. Crew for the [Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce](#) web feature [Crew's News](#) (June 2008).