

SUMMER Break Survival:

Tips for Parents & Caregivers

Happy Summer! As your children have more free time on their hands, it can be overwhelming to maintain their day-to-day activities and your outside responsibilities. Consider the following tips:



Schedule fun.

Together with your children, come up with your summer “bucket list” or list of activities the family wants and can afford to do this summer. Put some plans on the calendar.

Need ideas? Check out these [100 Easy Summer Activities for Kids and Caregivers](#) for inspiration and fun ways to fight off summertime boredom.



Resist the urge to overschedule.

When it comes to the summer, childcare and work schedules, having a consistent routine is important, it’s also imperative to allow time for unstructured downtime to avoid burnout and recharge.



Create some structure and set boundaries.

Enjoy being freed from the tight structure of the school year, but also provide your kids security. Aim to keep the same bedtime routine, care habits, maintain the same chore schedule, etc.



Watch for Stress.

As summer unfolds, observe behavior. Are family members feeling harried, short tempered, distracted, tense? Are your earlier expectations about summer not meshing with the day-to-day reality? Be alert for symptoms of stress in your family. Step back and ask yourself, “What’s happening here and how can we get ourselves under control?”

Remember, it can take time for some children *and* adults to adapt to a change in patterns or a lack of routine.



PARENTS:

take care of your well-being

Facing a long summer break may feel daunting at first and we can go into overdrive with planning, or break down at the thought of it.

- When things become overwhelming, focus on the day-to-day, and think about what's in your control to do right now.
- Include self-care in your summer. [Here are Quick Tips for Self-Care and Stress Relief.](#)
- A simple meditation is a good opportunity to take a moment for yourself. [Incorporate mindfulness and meditation into your life.](#)
- Respect your own boundaries. Simply say no when needed. You can use phrases like 'I can't do that right now' or 'that's a good idea but it wouldn't work for my family'.

EMPLOY QUICK AND EASY STRESS BUSTERS

- Movement – take a walk, stretch, do an online exercise class
- Physical warmth – take a bath, hold a hot drink, wrap up in a cozy blanket
- Turn on music, dance, sing, chant or hum
- Use breathing techniques that focus on extended exhalation (sighing, blowing bubbles)
- Massage the sides of your neck or temples
- Connect with people that feel safe

If you're feeling overwhelmed by stress, you may need some extra support.

Schedule time to talk to someone. A professional counselor is a great option. Contact your Assistance Program for help and resources.