

National ECELC Newsletter

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Family Summertime Fun!

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The National ECELC

Welcome to the National Early Care and Education Collaboratives Project (ECELC) Newsletter! We hope this newsletter is helpful as we offer supplemental information to help you prepare for the Learning Sessions and provide technical assistance to early care and education (ECE) providers. Topics within each newsletter will emphasize areas outlined in the *Let's Move!* Child Care goals including healthy eating, physical activity, screen time, and breastfeeding support. We hope you enjoy it!

-The National ECELC Team

Visit the *Let's Move!* Child Care website:

www.healthykidshealthyfuture.org

It's summertime, and while we all look forward to warmer days it can be a challenge for many working families. Summertime signals juggling new schedules both at home and at early learning centers where summer camps, school age children and additional activities can be quite challenging! Our infants, toddlers and preschoolers, however, are excited by all that summer brings, so let's take a deep breath and take advantage of all this season has to offer and enjoy our time with our families.

Families can celebrate with great books, playful experiences with water and music, and explore nature and local attractions together. Help families plan a weekly activity using some of the ideas below.

If you are looking for a place where children can have fun, learn new and exciting things, inspire a real love of learning, and build important skills and

knowledge – look no further than your own city!

Families with young children can take advantage of low-cost or no-cost places to play together, including:

- Children's museums
- Art, Science and History museums
- Local Parks, Playgrounds and Community Gardens
- Zoos, Botanical Gardens, Nature Centers and Aquariums

Local libraries are a wonderful place to spend a hot morning or afternoon. Let parents know they can attend story time and borrow books to read at home. Many libraries and museums have special events and performances for free. Check the local library or museum to see events and attractions available for families to enjoy.

What is your favorite summertime memory? Share with your ECE providers!

During the summer months, families can...

1. **Take their child to a live performance** - Family-friendly events are a great way to teach your child about the performing arts.

2. **Read books together**
Choose stories that focus on playing outdoors, visiting relatives, and cooling off in the water. Read a story and then repeat! Try new words with children. Play with words in a real and a silly way!

3. **Turn any walk into a nature walk** Use time outdoors with young children to help them learn about the natural world. Explore your neighborhood, observe the weather, examine plants, flowers, and more!

4. **Visit museums and libraries**
Find low-cost or no-cost local attractions to visit with young children.

5. **Prepare meals together!**
Picnics, holidays and casual meals are fun to create together.

Questions?

Please contact your State/Local Project Coordinator or one of our Content Specialists:

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Ideas to Enhance Summertime Learning!

Water, water everywhere! A day at the beach, by the river, or creek side, in a kiddie pool or simply in the bathtub! Splash, empty and fill, cool off – always with supervision!

How Does Your Garden Grow? Community garden plots, home gardens, lettuce, flowers in pots. Don't forget the sunflowers!

Summer Children's Books

- The Grouchy Ladybug and The Very Lonely Firefly by Eric Carle
- Where is Baby's Beach Ball? lift-the-flap book by Karen Katz
- Barnyard Dance! and Hey! Wake Up! by Sandra Boynton
- Trains; Bus; Planes; Boats and My Bike by Byron Barton
- The Napping House by Audrey and Don Wood
- One Fish Two Fish Red Fish Blue Fish by Dr. Seuss
- Jamerry by Bruce Degen

Musical Fun! Borrow children's musical CD's from the local library or download to dance together or listen to while resting.

Museum & Library Programs for Families with Young Children (Below are some examples of programs offered in a few communities. Look for what your area offers.)

- Boston's Children Museum has a replica of a kindergarten classroom with activities to help families prepare Pre-K children for kindergarten.
- Idaho libraries use digital assets for family story time in rural areas.
- Denver offers free access to cultural experiences to children through five years of age.
- New Orleans Louisiana Children's Museum is working with literacy centers, parenting, early childhood research, nature, health, and child care.
- Houston offers *Para los Ninos*, a Spanish-language family learning program.
- Atlanta Botanical Gardens offers cooking classes in the edible garden outside kitchen in the Children's Garden.

References

National Association for the Education of Young Children www.naeyc.org
Five Ideas to Encourage Learning This Summer, NAEYC for Families, June, 2016
Summer Learning With Children, NAEYC for Teachers, June, 2016

Susan Hildreth, Director, Institute for museum and library Services, "Museums and libraries for Summer Fun and Learning", June, 2016, NAEYC For Families

Adapted from the Message in a Backpack for W.C. Ritz, 2011/2012, "Me and My Shadows", Teaching Young Children 5 (2): 22-25 @ NAEYC



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