

Friday, June 4, 2010

Dear Parents:

TONIGHT is the annual school carnival! It will be held at South Bay School from 5 – 8 pm. Take the King Salmon exit off of highway 101, go under the overpass, and drive straight into the school parking lot. You don't have to even cook dinner tonight. You can buy dinner for the entire family before you embark on a night of fun. There will be jolly jumps, clowns, face painting, a cake walk, mini-golf, a stuffed animal walk, the ever-popular Joke House, and more! There will also be a Dutch auction. This is a great family fun time. I hope to see you there.

Keep Kids Reading All Summer Long: Tips from Librarians. Few people have more experience getting kids excited about reading than librarians who staff school and local libraries. So we asked a few to share what really works and what to do to make sure your kid doesn't take a vacation from reading.

Full of Summer Reading Fun: Visit your local public library because there is so much going on and the enthusiasm of the librarians is infectious. So many libraries do wonderful summer reading programs for all ages. We actually have a program called "Teens & Tots" where older kids read to younger kids — it's great to make that connection between kids and both generations really enjoy it. We also hold a lot of activities at night like story hours so parents can come after work with their children — and we encourage parents to volunteer, which really shows the kids that reading is important to adults as well.

Research shows that if kids continue to read during the summer they don't lose any of the skills, so we try to find ways to motivate kids like having them keep reading logs and giving rewards and prizes. We also hold "Book Bingo" and replace the numbers on the board with book titles and library vocabulary. The kids get really excited to win the books we use as prizes — it's so great to hear a kid yelling, "Yes! Yes! I just need Dewey decimal!" —Anita LaSpina, Librarian, Rockville Center, NY

Show Children That Reading is Important to You Model, model, [model](#). It cannot be emphasized enough that children who observe their parents reading become readers themselves. Make sure there are plenty of reading materials scattered throughout the house — not just novels, but magazines and newspapers as well.

Make reading a family activity. When everyone gathers together at the end of a busy summer day, read a book [aloud](#). It's a great way to unwind. A picture book is a fine choice, but reading a book that will last several weeks or more extends the pleasure and excitement. — Jennifer Hubert Swan, Librarian at the Little Red School House/Elisabeth Irwin High School, New York, NY

Make Reading a Way to Connect: Some children respond better when they know other children are going to read and respond to a book, which is why [book discussion groups](#) are great. I also think parents should be required to read what their children read at all ages so they can really connect with their child and be able to answer questions and instigate discussion. This is one of the reasons parent/child book groups are so great.

We also regularly hold online chats with authors of books on our summer reading list, which kids can join from anywhere they can get online. Kids get really excited to ask the authors questions and just talk to a "real live" writer. We have a regular chat-room just for children to talk about the books that they've read, which is catching on. — **John Peters, Central Children's Room, The New York Public Library**

Set Reading Times and Find the Fun in Books: The number one golden rule is to make time to read over the summer — parents should designate an hour a day just for books, or set aside a time once a week to go to the library. There's so much going on in the summer, so much temptation to be outside, that it's important to schedule time just for reading. Have kids keep a reading journal — even if it's just the book titles. Once the journal gets filled up, there's a real sense of accomplishment that's very rewarding.

On vacations, it's important to let kids pick out books they like to make reading fun. Pay attention to what your children like and help them select books — and don't forget about non-fiction — it's not just for homework! There's a lot of rainy day value with cookie cookbooks and craft and activity books.

Make story time fun by creating a story-puppet show. Or have your child use puppets and stuffed animals to create a show based on a book for other kids or the rest of the family. Another fun thing to do is to go on a [field trip](#) with a book tie-in or two. And while you're on the road, always keep magazines and books in the car. — **Dorie Freebury, Librarian, Northville, MI**

Take Reading on the Road: When preparing for family road trips, stock up on audio books from your library. Let your children choose some stories to listen to in the car. Have family members share favorite ghost stories and/or adventure stories around the campfire at picnics and on camping trips. — **The American Library Association***

We will be conducting a short closing ceremony on the last day, Thursday, June 17, beginning at 12:15. I will be giving each student his/her award, report card, and kindergarten certificate. You are invited to come and help say good-bye to a fantastic group of young people. Also, please be sure to take care of all unpaid lunch fees or pay for any lost library books. Please remember that the last day is a Minimum Day. This means all the kids in the entire school will be released at the same time and the parking lot will be crowded.