



## Planning for Summer Fun

From Executive Director Jeanne Alter

There is something so relaxed and liberating about summer time, when extra daylight hours create a new rhythm and open up new possibilities for fun. For many of us, the extra hours are a welcome relief from the fast pace of our busy days. For young children with special needs who rely on the predictability of structure, the extra free time can be a challenge.

Planning is key to making the most of these extra hours with your child. Here are some simple ideas to help you make the most of the long summer days. Each child has different interests and abilities, so choose activities that capture your child’s attention.



### Family Reading Time:

Young children have favorite books and love to hear the same story over and over again. Find a quiet place with a pile of books and some pillows, and spend time reading and looking at pictures. Ask your child’s teacher for recommendations.

### Learning While Vacationing

If you are planning a vacation this summer, use the opportunity to teach your child new vocabulary words while they have new experiences. The outdoors captivates children – whether they are playing at the beach, at the lake, or walking in the city or country. “Beach, sand, wave, salt, hike, mud, shade, bugs, wind, footprint, etc. ”... all these words are learned best while engaging in special times with family.

### Learning Locally

Don’t forget about the local park, museum, zoo, aquarium, and other interesting places. Your local community is full of learning opportunities. Check out the websites in the box at the right for loads of free events around NYC, and see our section below about using your library card as a Culture Pass!

### Check Out These Websites for Fun Around the City:

<https://growingupnyc.cityofnewyork.us/>

<https://www.nycgo.com/articles/free-for-kids>

<https://mommypoppins.com/>

<https://www.nypl.org/events/calendar>

### Turn Daily Activities into Learning Opportunities

If you are at the grocery store with your child, have them identify items in the cart, count the number of peaches, or identify the colors of the apples. There is no end to what you and your child can talk about when in the store. Driving to grandmother's house? Ask them to find certain colors, shapes, or patterns along the way.



Starting this summer, your library card can get you a lot more than books! **Culture Pass** allows library-card holders to reserve free passes to dozens of museums and cultural institutions around the city.

Simply visit [culturepass.nyc](http://culturepass.nyc), select your library (New York, Brooklyn, or Queens Public Library), enter your library card barcode and pin, then choose from the variety of participating institutions and select when you'd like to visit.

After reserving a pass—good for up to four people— you can print your pass at home or at your local library, or select the mobile option, and show the reservation confirmation on your phone.

### Participating Institutions Include:

- Brooklyn Botanic Garden
- Brooklyn Children’s Museum
- Children’s Museum of Manhattan
- Children’s Museum of the Arts
- Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum
- New York Transit Museum
- Queens Museum
- Sugar Hill Children’s Museum
- And Many More!



## PAINTED SHELLS



### What You'll Need:

- Shells for painting (either hand gathered from the ocean, or bought from a craft store)
- Paint (watercolor paint, tempera paint, or acrylic will work)
- Brushes



### Why We Love This Art Project

Nothing says 'summertime' like a handful of seashells! In addition to celebrating the season and providing an afternoon of creativity and fun, this simple activity presents so many opportunity for learning.

Here are a few ideas you can discuss while painting shells:

- Use descriptive vocabulary: Are the shells big, small, flat, round, bumpy?
- Identify colors and talk about what happens when we mix two colors together: "What happens when I mix blue and yellow? Look, it makes green!"
- Practice following directions: "Put all the little shells in this cup," or "Let's paint all the big shells blue."
- Make patterns with big and little shells, or alternating colors of shells.

## Accessing Healthy Foods in the Summertime: The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)

As you know, KCC students receive a healthy breakfast and lunch every day, at no cost to our families, including during our summer session. But for children who do not attend school during the summertime, **the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)** allows income-eligible children to receive nutritious meals when school is not in session. For information on locations near you that participate in SFSP, visit: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/summerfoodrocks> or call SFPS toll-free at 1-800-522-5006.

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## Summer Recipe: Frozen Strawberry-Granola Yogurt Bites

These frozen yogurt bites are a great treat on a hot summer day, and simple enough that your little one can help you make them. Let your child help put the granola in the cupcake liners, or press the strawberries gently into the yogurt. You can enjoy these treats together as a cool snack, breakfast, or dessert!

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup strawberry yogurt
- 1/2 cup granola
- 6 large fresh strawberries

### Directions:

- Lay out approximately 12 cupcake liners on a small baking sheet or in a muffin/cupcake tray (this will need to fit in your freezer, so you may want to check the size before you start)
- Sprinkle a thin layer of granola over the bottom of each liner. Using a spoon, dollop some yogurt on top of the granola in each case. Spread the yogurt with a spoon to make sure it completely covers the granola
- Cut each strawberry in half and remove the stem. Press half a strawberry into the yogurt in each liner.
- Place the cups (still on the baking tray) into the freezer and leave for at least 4 hours, or until solid. Once frozen, remove from the liners and serve, or put them in a bag or container and put them back in the freezer for later.



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