

summer activity guide

Family Resource:
Supporting Virtual Summer
Programming in the Home

QUICK
GUIDE



About the Summer Activity Guides

Summers are for fun and engaged learning. In 2020 as the impact of the pandemic is widely felt, summer opportunities will be different for young people, families, and afterschool and summer program staff. The Summer Activity Guides were developed to help engage youth with supportive adults in a range of places.

The activities and resources in the Summer Activity Guides are intentionally designed to support youth-serving summer programs in driving consistent engagement and providing ongoing opportunities for youth skill-building and emotional well-being. In addition to the activities for youth, supplemental materials will be available to support professional development and enhance family engagement.

The Guides include 150 original activities and challenges organized by four different age groups (5-9) (10-12) (13-15) (16-18). The activities are adaptable for in-person and virtual instruction, or a hybrid of both, as well as sent as take-home packets.

All activities should be safely executed and aligned with state and local health guidelines.



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Supporting Virtual Summer Programming in the Home

Resource for Families

INTRODUCTION

The summer is here, and as families and caregivers, you are probably wondering how you will keep your youth safe and engaged, while also practicing social distancing and other healthy behaviors during the COVID-19 outbreak. This is an unpredictable time, but the good news is that there are easy and tangible things you can do to navigate this summer and support your kids in having a fun, engaging and productive summer.

The purpose of this resource is to provide guidance to you, as parents and caregivers of youth, in implementing and supporting summer programming in the home. This guide is a supplement to the [Summer Activity Guide](#), which is a suite of activities and resources intentionally designed to support youth-serving summer programs in delivering programming through multiple approaches during the COVID-19 pandemic. The activities and challenges are organized by themes (Who I Am, Healthy Life, Passion & Purpose, Invention & Imagination, and Exploring My World) and by age groups (5-9, 10-12, 13-15 and 16-18) and include extension ideas that you can turn into ongoing projects. They were designed to be easily implemented with limited support and readily available materials.

TIPS FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ALL YOUTH

Plan Ahead and Create a Schedule – You can help your child establish and stick with a routine. This is particularly important for children that are participating in virtual programming throughout the summer. Just like before the pandemic – encourage them to wake up at the same time, get dressed, eat a healthy breakfast, and make time for summer programming. Remember too that kids need free, unstructured playtime, as well as time to relax and decompress. Build in free time to their schedule in between activities and chores. Lastly, make sure to reduce screen time and build in time for exercise.

Gather Materials – A comprehensive list of all materials needed to complete the activities and challenges is available. For materials not readily on hand, work with your youth’s summer program to provide them, find suitable substitutes at home or check your local dollar store

Make Space for Learning – If your children are participating in virtual sessions and/or completing take-home activities through your local program, pick a quiet and comfortable space in your home that you can dedicate for learning and doing activities. If your child is working in a shared space, try to limit distractions, like turning off the television.

Do It Together – If your local program is providing virtual, digital or take-home programming, your kids will likely be doing some of the activities and challenges at home. This is a great way to spend time with them and do it together. If you have younger children and your schedule does not allow you to engage in the activities with your child, check-in with them daily, ask them to show you what they’ve done, and recognize their accomplishment.

Collaborate with Program Staff – The staff at your child’s summer program are typically more than willing to connect to ensure your child has everything he/she needs to engage in the program. If you have questions or concerns about technology, your youth’s well-being and needs, or about the activities – make sure to reach out early and often. If your child is attending the program in person, you can ask your questions directly to staff during pick up or drop off.

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Connect with other Parents – You are definitely not in this alone. Check-in with other parents to see how they are doing, if they need help, or if they can share what’s working for them and their children. As an adult, it’s important that you maintain strong social connections and work together as a community.

AGE-SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Below are specific recommendations for you and your child based on their age and developmental needs. These practices are adapted from [Child Mind Institute’s Strategies for Learning at Home](#).

	Tips for Younger Youth (5 – 12)	Tips for Older Youth (13-18)
Supporting Virtual Sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Help your child with getting the technology set up in your home○ At the beginning of the session, make sure they can see and hear the instructor and know how to use the different functions (ex. chat box)○ For very young children sit with them for some or all of the session○ Check-in with your child after the session or at the end of the day to see how it went and ask questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Help your child with getting the technology set up in your home○ Respect their privacy and avoid sitting in on their online sessions. This is their time to connect with peers and program staff○ Check-in with your child after the session or at the end of the day to see how it went and ask questions
Supporting Activities and Challenges Completed in the Home	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Help them gather materials for the activity or challenge○ Review the instructions with them and make sure they understand○ If applicable, do the activity with them○ Offer praise for their hard work and acknowledge their completed activities and challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Make sure they have the materials for the activity or challenge○ Ask your child questions about what they learned from the activity or challenge○ Offer praise for their hard work and acknowledge their strengths/what they do well
Motivating and Keeping Your Child on Track	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ For younger children with shorter attention spans, allow them to take breaks and come back to the activity when they are ready○ For youth 10 – 12 years old, give them choice and a sense of control. Let them decide when and how to do the activities○ Acknowledge their feelings and let them talk○ Point out what they are doing well and show your appreciation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Adolescents crave independence. Allow them to make choices about how and when they complete their activities○ Hear out their concerns and validate their feelings○ Avoid having the same arguments over-and-over again. This signals to your teen that you are expecting them to do something that they are strongly opposed to doing. If it is too difficult or overwhelming, break it down into smaller tasks that are more manageable

The 50 State Afterschool Network



The Summer Activity Guide has been developed for the 50 State Afterschool Network with leadership from the Georgia Statewide Afterschool Network to engage and support children and youth nationwide.

In each state, the afterschool network is broadening opportunities for youth. Seeking equitable outcomes for underserved children to succeed in school and future jobs, a statewide afterschool network brings together cross-sector leaders with a common vision and coordinated strategy to advance quality afterschool and summer learning programs

Alabama Afterschool Community Network
Alaska Afterschool Network
Arizona Center for Afterschool Excellence
Arkansas Out of School Network
California AfterSchool Network
Colorado Afterschool Partnership
Connecticut After School Network
Delaware Afterschool Network
Florida Afterschool Network
Georgia Statewide Afterschool Network
Hawai'i Afterschool Alliance
Idaho Afterschool Network
Afterschool for Children and Teens Now (ACT Now) Coalition (IL)
Indiana Afterschool Network
Iowa Afterschool Alliance
Kansas Enrichment Network
Kentucky Out-of-School Alliance
Louisiana Center for Afterschool Learning
Maine Afterschool Network
Maryland Out of School Time Network
Massachusetts Afterschool Partnership
Michigan After-School Partnership
Ignite Afterschool (MN)
Missouri AfterSchool Network
Mississippi Statewide Afterschool Network
Montana Afterschool Alliance
Beyond School Bells (NE)

Nevada Afterschool Network
New Hampshire Afterschool Network
New Jersey School- Age Care Coalition
NMOST (New Mexico Out of School Time) Network
New York State Network for Youth Success
North Carolina Center for Afterschool Programs
North Dakota Afterschool Network
Ohio Afterschool Network
Oklahoma Partnership for Expanded Learning Opportunities
OregonASK
Pennsylvania Statewide Afterschool/Youth Development Network
Rhode Island Afterschool Network
South Carolina Afterschool Alliance
South Dakota Afterschool Network
Tennessee Afterschool Network
Texas Partnership for Out of School Time
Utah Afterschool Network
Vermont Afterschool, Inc.
Virginia Partnership for Out-of-School Time
Washington Expanded Learning Opportunities Network
West Virginia Statewide Afterschool Network
Wisconsin Afterschool Network
Wyoming Afterschool Alliance