

BACK TO SCHOOL

HAWAII PARENT

THE MAGAZINE FOR FAMILIES

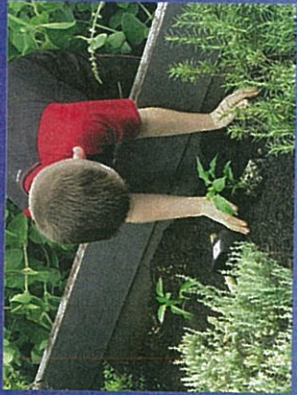


**6 Things Dads
Should Know**

**Tattling
Versus Reporting**

**Speed Up
the Dawdler**

GET YOUR KIDS BACK TO LEARNING, THRIVING...



Summer is a time for fun and relaxation, but it doesn't mean that your child or teen's brain goes on vacation.

Keeping youth fully engaged throughout summer can prevent the 'summer slide.' This refers to the loss of math and literacy skills when young minds are not engaged outside of school. In fact, youth can lose up to three months of these skills during the summer, which means their back-to-school performance is behind where they ended in the spring.

Unfortunately, with the disruption our youth have endured with distance learning, social distancing and the stress of living through a pandemic, summer learning loss isn't the only critical issue.

Our youth have also faced barriers to developing social and emotional learning skills that help them build strong relationships, manage emotions and make good decisions. These are life skills critical for becoming healthy, resilient and productive adults.

by Diane Tabangay,
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At the YMCA, our summer programs provide a safe place where youth of all ages can develop skills, self-confidence, new friendships and a sense of belonging – all while having tons of fun.

Our "fun" activities at the Y are intentionally developed to overcome learning loss and build social and emotional skills by focusing on these four skill building areas:

1. *Communication: Appropriately expressing needs, concerns and feelings.*
2. *Collaboration: Getting along with others, developing emotional intelligence.*
3. *Critical-thinking: Gathering and evaluating information to make informed, rational decisions.*

4. Creativity: Turning imagination into reality.

Here are ways our Y uses "fun" activities to help get youth back on track to learning and thriving:

CREATIVE PLAY

Creative play is more than just fun and games. Exposure to the arts from an early age is critical to the cognitive, physical, and social-emotional development of youth. In fact, youth who have regular access to digital arts, literature, dance, drama, music and visual arts build 21st century skills more rapidly than youth who do not.

Our Y programs incorporate both visual and performing arts into summer activities. Youth get to try their hand at sculpturing, painting, drawing and mosaic making. And put their creative energy into dancing, singing and hip hopping to music from the past and present. This summer youth will even have a chance to make music with their own handmade instruments.

STEM

Integrating science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) is a natural and fun component of summer programming at our Y.

You don't need a lab coat or a Bunsen burner to implement activities that help to promote critical thinking. A favorite activity at our camps are our nature scavenger hunts where youth get to explore and discover new plants and bugs and are challenged to find creative uses for leaves, rocks, twigs and other items they find during their "hunt." Our "Weird Science" week encourages kids to observe, question, investigate, analyze and communicate findings as they ponder and experiment to find answers to questions such as how many ways can you make slime? What's the science behind magic? Can water walk?

READING

In addition to providing lots of opportunities to read treasured favorites, we encourage youth to create their own stories as well. During our "Tell Me a Story" week, youth learn the art of creating their own stories from amazing storytellers who share myths and legends from around the world along with their own personal stories that shaped their life journeys.

MATH

Practicing fractions through cooking, learning about basic computation through cooperative game playing and creating art projects involving tactile math are just some of the ways we make math magical. Even our youngest youth can get involved by playing games that involve pattern and sequence.

GLOBAL CITIZENS

Exploring the amazing diversity of our own communities and beyond leads to a greater understanding and appreciation of a wide variety of cultures. This summer our youth will travel to iconic places throughout our island home and beyond – virtually - through tours, games, stories and music. Youth will also have the opportunity to give back to their community through projects that include making toys for rescued animals, replenishing food pantries, building gardens and more.

Combining the opportunity to make lots of new friend and summer fun with intentional learning experiences will keep our youth interested and engaged all summer long, so they return to school in the fall on track and ready to learn!

For details on YMCA of Honolulu Summer Day Camps, Specialty Camps, Camp Erdman Overnight Camps and Teen Programs, along with information on special payment plans, financial assistance and Y Family Membership discounts, go to ymcahonolulu.org.

"Youth will also have the opportunity to give back to their community."