

Helping Kids Transition From School to Summer

	Mental Health Series	
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Establishing a Summer Routine

The end of the school year is here, and while summer brings excitement, it can also be a challenging time for children. Without the structure and routine of school, kids may experience boredom, restlessness, or even feelings of isolation. Many children thrive on routine, and when that disappears, it can be confusing for them. As parents, we can help ease this transition by maintaining some level of routine, which can help kids feel a sense of stability and purpose. By creating balance between relaxation and structure, we can ensure our children have a summer filled with growth, connection and fun. Here are some tips for creating a summer routine:

- Stick to consistent sleep schedules: After long, active days in the sun, children often need more rest. A regular sleep routine supports both physical and mental well-being.
- Plan regular mealtimes: Scheduling breakfast, lunch, and dinner encourages healthy eating habits and helps prevent excessive snacking.
- Incorporate daily activities: Include physical activity, learning opportunities, and downtime. Kids often function better with consistent daily structure.
- Make time for fun: Plan weekly outings or activities, such as walks, library visits, or bike rides. Take advantage of community summer programs to enrich your child's routine.



Keeping Kids Connected

Without daily interactions with classmates, some kids may feel a bit lost during summer. Social connections shape how kids see themselves and where they fit in. Here are some ways to help them stay connected:

- Organize Playdates or Group Activities: Regular meetups provide structure and social interaction.
- Summer Camps and Community Programs: Great opportunities to meet new friends with similar interests.
- Stay Connected with School Friends: Encourage video calls or meetups to maintain important relationships.
- Join Clubs or Classes: Help kids develop new skills while making friends.
- Attend Community Events: Local festivals, sports events, or workshops offer fun ways to socialize.

As a parent, you play a vital role in helping your kids stay connected with friends and family. By prioritizing time with loved ones, you show them the value of meaningful relationships. If organizing playdates is difficult due to transportation or communication issues, consider coordinating with other parents to arrange group activities or carpools. Keeping kids socially connected over the summer helps them head back to school feeling confident and supported.

Featured Articles

Balancing Screen Time

Why is screen time a concern during summer?

With extra free time in the summer, kids often turn to screens more. While that's not always a bad thing, too much screen time can lead to less physical activity, disrupted sleep, and feeling disconnected from others.

What are the recommended limits?

Experts, like the American Academy of Pediatrics, recommend keeping recreational screen time to about 2 hours a day for kids over five. Breaking it up with other activities can help prevent overstimulation.

What are the benefits of reducing screen time?

Less screen time can mean better sleep, focus, and overall mental health. The blue light from screens can interfere with sleep, so limiting screen time before bed can make a big difference.

How can parents set boundaries?

Set up screen-free zones at home, such as the dinner table or bedrooms, to encourage breaks from devices.

Can screens be used productively?

Yes! Educational apps, documentaries, and creative projects can make screen time more meaningful. The key is finding a balance that works for your family.



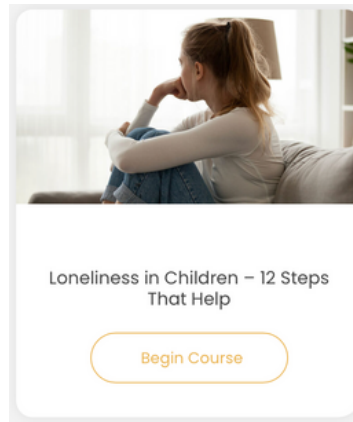
Summer is a great time to check in on your child's mental health. With a more relaxed schedule, it's easier to notice changes like extra sleep or withdrawal, which could be signs they need support. If needed, this can also be a good time to explore mental health resources.



For helpful parenting resources visit:
[ParentGuidance.org](https://www.parentguidance.org)

Easing the Summer Transition

- **Listen and Validate Feelings:** Ask your child about their expectations for summer - whether it's excitement, boredom, or even anxiety and validate their emotions.
- **Collaborate on Rules:** Involve kids in setting screen time limits or planning activities together.
- **Be Flexible with the Schedule:** Allow routines to change based on daily needs.
- **Model Healthy Habits:** Show healthy screen habits yourself, such as avoiding phones during meals or family time.
- **Ease into the Summer Routine:** Gradually adjust to the new schedule as summer begins.



Take a no-cost course at [ParentGuidance.org](https://www.parentguidance.org)

Take this course to learn 12 actionable steps that help children build meaningful connections and combat loneliness.

Works Cited

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