



Support. Education. Local Events.  
*for Adoptive Families*



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## Don't Let This Become Just Another Hazy, Lazy Summer!

We all love summer, right? The warm sun and long days seem to brighten our moods. We can finally put away our heavy coats and run through the grass with our bare feet. We spend our evenings at the park and our weekends at the lake. And, our children are home 24/7!

We know, as adoptive parents, this can be a trying time. The lack of structure that school brings often leaves our children overwhelmed and dysregulated. The loss of support the school staff provides can leave us struggling to manage our child's behaviors alone.

But, this time is truly a gift! The school year is busy...it keeps us running from morning to night! Summer is the time to slow down and realize that our time with our children is short. Every summer gone is one less that we will have with them. Don't let this opportunity pass you by.

Take advantage of this time with your child. Structure these unstructured days with time together. Go for a walk and marvel at the world around you. Pack a lunch and enjoy a picnic in the park. Teach your child to ride a bike, catch a ball, or simply play tag together. Light a bonfire, toast some marshmallows, and take a moment to reconnect with your child. This time is yours and if you close your eyes for too long, it will be gone!

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The PARC newsletter is published quarterly. Please direct questions and comments to [parcnewsletter@bethany.org](mailto:parcnewsletter@bethany.org)

Bethany Christian Services is a nonprofit, private social services agency with more than 115 offices located in 36 states. In addition, Bethany offers social services to children and families in 15 countries.



[www.bethany.org](http://www.bethany.org)

**DID YOU KNOW?**

Summer learning loss accounts for about two-thirds of the ninth grade achievement gap in reading.

Students score lower on standardized tests at the end of summer vacation than they do at the beginning of summer vacation, with low-income and at-risk students seeing the biggest drops.

[www.publicschoolreview.com/blog/prevent-brain-drain-keep-your-kids-minds-sharp-during-vacation](http://www.publicschoolreview.com/blog/prevent-brain-drain-keep-your-kids-minds-sharp-during-vacation)



## Post-Adoption Resource Center

### AVAILABLE SERVICES

#### Working with your adoptive family:

- Support of a PARC specialist in your home
- 24-hour crisis availability
- Short-term emergency intervention
- Family-centered plan
- List of supportive regional resources

#### Connecting you with community services:

- Liaison for adoptive families to other service providers
- One-on-one assistance accessing services
- Comprehensive resource guide

#### Getting you the information you need:

- Daily phone access
- Timely responses with information
- Connection to resources

#### Supporting your family:

- Monthly group experiences
- Quarterly training

#### Sharing even more:

- PARC website with recommended books/articles on adoption
- List of community resources
- Calendar of adoptive parents' events and trainings
- Adoptive family newsletter

## Make Science Hit Home this Summer!



You don't have to be in a science lab to do an experiment. In fact, there are tons of safe, easy, and inexpensive and fun ways to experiment with science in your own home!

### BLOW UP A BALLOON WITH YEAST!

#### YOU WILL NEED:

- A packet of yeast (available in your grocery store)
- A small, clean, clear plastic pop bottle (16oz or smaller)
- 1 teaspoon of sugar
- Some warm water
- A small balloon

#### WHAT TO DO:

Fill the bottle with about one inch of warm water. (When yeast is cold or dry the micro-organisms are resting.)

Add all of the yeast packet and gently swirl the bottle a few seconds. (As the yeast dissolves, it comes to life! But, don't bother looking to see it move. It is microscopic.)

Add the sugar and swirl it around some more. (Like people, yeast needs energy (food). Now it is eating.)

Blow up the balloon a few times to stretch it out and then place the neck of the unflated balloon over the neck of the bottle.

Let the bottle sit in a warm place for about 20 minutes. If all goes well the balloon will inflate!

### BEND WATER WITH STATIC ELECTRICITY!

#### YOU WILL NEED:

- A dry plastic comb
- An indoor faucet
- A head full of clean, dry hair

#### WHAT TO DO:

Turn on the faucet and slowly turn down the water until you have a very thin stream of water flowing.

Take the plastic comb and brush it through your hair ten times.

Now slowly bring the comb close to the flowing water, but don't actually touch the water. If all goes well, the stream of water should bend towards the comb!



Visit [www.sciencebob.com](http://www.sciencebob.com) to see how and why these work and for many more great science experiments you can do at home with your child, such as making an exploding lunch bag, getting a paperclip to float, and creating a levitating orb!

## Science is Fun - Believe it or not!

On September 13, 1922, in the shade the temperature in the Libyan Desert reached 136 degrees Fahrenheit. This is hot enough to fry an egg on a rock!

On July 4, 1956, a world record for the most rain falling in one minute was recorded in Unionville, Maryland. The record was 1.23 inches!

Hailstones weighing 1.67 pounds fell in Coffeyville, Kansas on September 3, 1970, setting a world record!

[www.brighthubeducation.com/summer-learning-activities-ideas/114567-fun-summer-facts-for-kids/](http://www.brighthubeducation.com/summer-learning-activities-ideas/114567-fun-summer-facts-for-kids/)

## NO COST & LOW COST FAMILY FUN IN MICHIGAN

Find a Kid's Bowl Free location near you for two free games each day this summer!  
[kidsbowlfree.com](http://kidsbowlfree.com)

Visit a local farm or u-pick farm  
[pickyourown.org](http://pickyourown.org)

Lowe's Build and Grow Clinic  
[lowesbuildandgrow.com](http://lowesbuildandgrow.com)

Home Depot's Kids Workshops  
[homedepot.com/workshops](http://homedepot.com/workshops)

BENZIE COUNTY  
Benzie Area Historical Museum  
[benziemuseum.org](http://benziemuseum.org)

ISABELLA COUNTY  
Spray Park at Island Park  
[mt-pleasant.org](http://mt-pleasant.org)

OTTAWA COUNTY  
Capon House and Settlers House Museums  
[hollandmuseum.org/capon-house](http://hollandmuseum.org/capon-house)

KENT COUNTY  
Grand Rapids Art Museum  
[artmuseumgr.org](http://artmuseumgr.org)

Grand Rapids Gymnastics  
[grgymnastics.com](http://grgymnastics.com)

Kentwood Fun Spot  
[kentwoodfunspot.com](http://kentwoodfunspot.com)

Jumpin' Jupiter Skate  
[jumpinjupiter.net](http://jumpinjupiter.net)

Kent County Recycling and Education Center  
[recyclekent.org](http://recyclekent.org)

MIDLAND COUNTY  
Midland Spray Parks  
[cityofmidlandmi.gov](http://cityofmidlandmi.gov)

MONTCALM COUNTY  
Anderson & Girls Orchards  
[andersonandgirls.com](http://andersonandgirls.com)

Lakeview Farm  
Country Cheese House  
[farmcountrycheese.com](http://farmcountrycheese.com)

MUSKEGON COUNTY  
Carr-Fles Planetarium  
[muskegoncc.edu/astronomy/carr-fles-planetarium](http://muskegoncc.edu/astronomy/carr-fles-planetarium)

NEWAYGO COUNTY  
Loda Lake Wildflower Sanctuary  
Search: [Loda Lake Wildflower Sanctuary](http://Loda Lake Wildflower Sanctuary)

ROSCOMMON COUNTY  
The A.E. Seaman Mineral Museum of Michigan  
[museum.mtu.edu](http://museum.mtu.edu)

SAGINAW COUNTY  
Castle Museum  
of Saginaw County History  
Featuring: *Inspired by Bricks returns to the Castle Museum - LEGO® Themed-Exhibit*  
[castlemuseum.org](http://castlemuseum.org)

WEXFORD COUNTY  
Cadillac's Carl T. Johnson Hunting and Fishing Center  
[michigan.gov/huntfishcenter](http://michigan.gov/huntfishcenter)

# If You Don't Use It, You Lose It!

We've all heard this familiar phrase before. And, sure, there are certain times where it just doesn't ring true, such as riding a bike. But, when it comes to your child's academic gains, it couldn't be truer! Multiple studies have shown that kids lose valuable knowledge and skills when not actively engaged in stimulating activities for long periods of time.

Of course, this doesn't mean that you need to send your child away to summer school. In fact, there are many ways you can provide your children with activities throughout the summer—keeping their brains engaged and working, without taking away from their much earned vacation.

## START A FAMILY BOOK CLUB

This doesn't need to be a big ordeal. Simply pick a few books for both you and your child to read over the summer and then spend some time together chatting about them. Not only will this keep your child's reading skills top notch, but it will also provide you and your child with some quality time together to reinforce that bond that you are working to strengthen. And, who knows what you might learn, not only from the books you read, but through your talks with your child.

## MAKE MATH A PART OF YOUR DAILY ROUTINE, BUT KEEP IT FUN!

Math skills are often the first to go over long breaks, but some of the easiest to incorporate into your daily activities. Allowing your child to help you with the cooking is a great way to expose them to fractions. Ask them to double or half a recipe for you. And, don't forget to take your child grocery shopping with you too! Have them make the budget and then help them add, subtract, and multiply the prices of items and count out the money. Or if you are eating out, have your child calculate the tip!

Perhaps your child prefers sports over cooking? No problem. Watch some baseball this summer and spend time with your child calculating batting averages or slugging percentages.

The key is to ask math-related questions through the day. "Do we have enough plates? We need 6." "We need to leave

at 2:00 p.m. Can you tell me how many more minutes that leaves you to play?"

You can also use this simple technique to get your child to stop asking, "Are we there yet?" on your family vacation. "We have 200 miles left and we are traveling at 70 mph. Can you tell me how much longer until we are there?" It's not tricky, it's smart!

## DO THE DAILY CROSSWORD CHALLENGE TOGETHER!

Crosswords are a great way to keep your child's language skills sharp and provide valuable problem solving skills. Plus, they are fun! Whether you buy a book of crosswords to do with your child or make a game of seeing who can complete the daily one in the newspaper first, be sure to take advantage of this fun activity!

## MAKE FAMILY "GAME NIGHTS" A REGULAR THING...YOUR CHILD WON'T EVEN KNOW HE IS LEARNING!

Games are a great way for your child to learn to follow rules, take turns, focus, defer gratification, think creatively, and work on their problem solving skills. The game of Uno can teach your child pattern and color recognition as well as strategy and reasoning skills, as they figure out which cards to keep and which to lay down. Or have your child be the "banker" in Monopoly and make change for everyone. This game also helps teach your child more "grown-up" concepts such as saving, budgeting, and financial planning.

The game Memory helps hone your child's attention skills and, well, their memorization ability. Battleship is another great option. This game encourages planning and strategy and also helps with your child's deductive reasoning and memorization. And don't forget about Scrabble and Upwords! Not only do these games help sharpen your child's reading, vocabulary, and spelling skills, but they will also use math while adding up his or her points. Furthermore, your child will develop strategy as they try to figure out what word laid where will get them the most points! This is just a small list of all the great games out there that will keep your child's brain engaged and working hard!



Math skills are often the first to go over long breaks, but some of the easiest to incorporate into your daily activities.

## DON'T BE AFRAID TO MAKE THE LEARNING MORE STRUCTURED

It is alright to set aside an hour a day or a few hours a week to make education a priority over the summer. Download some practice sheets for your child to work on or ask your child's teacher for a summer learning packet. Encourage your child to journal about their day before bed. There are also many websites and apps out there that are educational and will help your child's mind stay sharp.

## ENCOURAGE LEARNING BUT REMEMBER: THIS IS YOUR CHILD'S VACATION

Vacations are designed to be a break... a much needed time away. As Americans, many of us tend to have the worldview of "all work and no play"! In fact, research shows that the number of unused vacation days for the average American is at a 40-year high. So, while keeping your child actively engaged in learning is important, overloading them over the summer months can leave them overwhelmed and exhausted. Therefore, take advantage of the teachable moments in your daily activities to make a strong connection between academics and real life for your child, but give them the time and space to relax and enjoy their time off!

## Client \_\_\_\_\_ Testimonials

"I don't know where we or our kids would be if it hadn't been for the services and support you have offered! You have and always will have a special place in my heart! Thank you for your support!"

In Loving Memory of  
Dr. Karyn Purvis  
May 31, 1949 – April 12, 2016



## upcoming events & training

All three PARCs have many family fun events planned for this Summer, as well as support groups and trainings.

Please check your PARC region's Facebook page, watch for monthly calendars, or give us a call to find out what is available near you.

### PARC Region 2: Northern Michigan

231.421.6500 • [jwicksall@bethany.org](mailto:jwicksall@bethany.org)

[www.facebook.com/](http://www.facebook.com/PostAdoptionResourceCenterOfNorthernMI)

[PostAdoptionResourceCenterOfNorthernMI](http://www.facebook.com/PostAdoptionResourceCenterOfNorthernMI)

Join us this summer for many family fun events, including the Butterfly House, a Beach Bums game, pool time at Crystal Mountain, Busy Bodies Bounce Town, the sand dunes, dinosaur gardens and Mill Creek Historic State Park! *And, back by popular demand, our backpack giveaway!* Watch our Facebook page and monthly calendars for information regarding our upcoming trainings!

### PARC Region 3: Central Michigan

231.924.3390

[www.facebook.com/](http://www.facebook.com/PostAdoptionResourceCenterCentralMichigan)

[PostAdoptionResourceCenterCentralMichigan](http://www.facebook.com/PostAdoptionResourceCenterCentralMichigan)

Become Your Child's Expert! Join our one-day conference with Kim Seidel in Midland. Call us to discuss our child care options.

Monthly activities will be held in Reed City, Gladwin, Fremont, Ludington, and Midland. Bring your family to Sandcastles Children's Museum in Ludington or Swimming at Fremont Recreation Center

### PARC Region 4: Western Michigan

616.710.5120 • [sirwin@bethany.org](mailto:sirwin@bethany.org)

[www.facebook.com/PARCRegion4](http://www.facebook.com/PARCRegion4)

#### Summer Slip and Slide Party

**WHEN:** June 22, 2016, 1:00–3:00 p.m.

**WHERE:** Salvation Army Kroc Center  
2500 S Division SW, Grand Rapids

Bring your bathing suit, sunscreen, and a towel.  
Please RSVP to Sherri Irwin at 616.710.5120 or [sirwin@bethany.org](mailto:sirwin@bethany.org).

#### Kid's Night In

June 11, July 9, and August 13, 5:30–8:30 p.m.

YMCA 3665 Hollywood Rd, St Joseph

Children ages 3 to 15 can be dropped off for a fun evening at the YMCA! Activities will include swimming, crafts, playtime, and a movie. Children will be supervised by YMCA and PARC staff. Bring a bathing suit and towel. Please RSVP to Kim Inman at 616.307.9936 or [kinman@bethany.org](mailto:kinman@bethany.org).

Join us this summer for other fun events in your area! We are planning events at Sky Zone, Millennium Park, Catch Air, Kangaroo Palace, Meg's Playhouse, Frederik Meijer Garden, and more. Check us out on Facebook to find out more about our support groups and family fun events throughout the region.

## SAVE THE DATES! REGION 4 TRAINING

### Protect Young Eyes: Defending Kids from Online Danger

Presented by Chris McKenna

Two-part series:

one for parents and one for  
school-aged children.

Dinner will be provided.

[www.youtube.com/](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dzECMLcda3o)  
[watch?v=dzECMLcda3o](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dzECMLcda3o)

September 26 and October 3, 2016

6:00–8:30 p.m.

Bethany Christian Services  
Conference Center—Door G  
901 Eastern Ave NE  
Grand Rapids, MI



Bethany Christian Services is committed to supporting adoptive families through the lifelong, rewarding journey of adoption.

#### REGION 2

Bethany Christian Services  
1055 Carriage Hill Dr, Ste 2  
Traverse City, MI 49686  
231.995.0870

[www.bethany.org/traversecity](http://www.bethany.org/traversecity)

Charlevoix, Emmett, Cheboygan, Presque Isle, Antrim, Otsego, Montmorency, Alpena, Leelanau, Benzie, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Crawford, Oscoda, Alcona, Manistee, Wexford, Missaukee, Roscommon, Ogemaw, and Iosco counties

#### REGION 3

Bethany Christian Services  
6995 West 48th St  
Fremont, MI 49412  
231.924.3390

[www.bethany.org/fremont](http://www.bethany.org/fremont)

Mason, Lake, Osceola, Clare, Gladwin, Arenac, Oceana, Newaygo, Mecosta, Isabella, Midland, Bay, Montcalm, Gratiot, Saginaw, Ionia, Clinton, and Shiawassee counties

#### REGION 4

Bethany Christian Services  
901 Eastern Ave NE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503  
616.224.7565

[www.bethany.org/grandrapids](http://www.bethany.org/grandrapids)

Allegan, Berrien, Cass, Kent, Muskegon, Ottawa, and Van Buren counties



[postadoptionrc.org](http://postadoptionrc.org)

other suggested websites: [www.adoptivefamilies.com](http://www.adoptivefamilies.com) [www.adoptioninstitute.org](http://www.adoptioninstitute.org)