



THE CATHOLIC ACADEMY  
OF STAMFORD

## Summer and Mental Health

Summer is here!

The students and teachers have worked so hard this school year and we are all looking forward to beginning a restful summer break. Summer means warm weather, summer camp, beach days, family vacations, and taking on new and exciting adventures with family and friends. During these days the children will also change but it will be a good change. In addition to taking note that in a couple of weeks they will see their friends again. All summer the children will be preparing for these moments and more.

### *Reflection*

With summer around the corner some nerves could also be settling in. You may be asking yourself "How can I support my child through the next couple of weeks, while including fun but also making it educational!"

Here are a couple of tips:

- Review this year's report card. Observe exactly where the lowest points were and start from there.
- Was it math? Start by building up those math skills. Addition, subtraction, multiplication, division. Flash cards. Grocery store shopping games.
- Was it reading? Start by going to the library. Have the student pick a book(s) check out books often and reward the student by completing books and then having them provide you a short summary of the story for comprehension checks.
- Was it socially? Practicing being kind, going over how to successfully show interest and care with others.

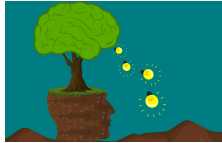
In addition it is important to bring the students into this conversation. Sitting down (could be outside) and reflecting with the children about their school year. With the following questions:

What is something new you learned this year that you are proud of?  
How did you show kindness or help someone at school?  
Who was someone that made your school year fun or special?  
If you could relive one day this year, which day would it be? Why?  
What is something new you want to try next year?

### *Application*

Keeping the children's mind active and preventing the summer slide can support and make transitions easier once the middle of August is here. Planning activities that of course are fun but blending it with an educational booster can bring fun for the entire family. For example, creating a routine of getting to do an activity outside everyday will help students that need the structure and routine something to look forward to (bike riding, going to the playground, the field, the lake). Making time to read is also

recommended. When you read to the children it allows their mind some quiet time, a break from their day and screens. If reading is emphasized it is also a time to bond with the children and hear about their day and any news ideas that they may have brewing in their brains. Adding math into the mix at the grocery store can help keep the math facts rotating in the mind over the summer as well. You can also practice math by printing math minute worksheets online.



### *May was Mental Health Awareness Month*

Here are a few ways families can support positive mental health at home:

- Talk about feelings every day "what made you smile today? What was the hardest part of your day?"
- Practice calming strategies together: deep breaths, listening to music, taking a walk.
- Make time for fun! Playing, laughing, fun emotional wellness.

Older students:

- Talking about balancing responsibilities, having time for school/afterschool but also rest time and down time.
- Monitoring screen time and sleep: managing these two can be tough but when it is done it can improve their mood, focus, and emotional regulation.
- Normalizing conversations about mental health. Reminding children that emotions do matter and that stress and conflict is common and that asking for help or talking about it, is good.



### Summer Reading

#### Elementary Fun Summer Series Reads

A Letter from your teacher: on the last day of school by Shannon Olsen  
Because of Mr. Terput by Rob Buyea  
Junie B Jones Book Series

#### Middle School Students Fun Summer Series Reads

Harry Potter Series by J.K Rowling  
Diary of a Wimpy Kid Series by Jeff Kinney  
The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald

Have a great summer and we look forward to welcoming you back in the fall.  
Thank you for all that you do.  
Sincerely, Mrs. Grijalva