



"Your Employees' Success is Our Business"

Summer Reading and Learning for Children

Every educator knows it. So do most parents. Summer reading is essential for kids!

Summer reading programs began in the 1890's as a way to encourage school children to read during their summer vacation, to use the library and to develop the habit of reading. Summer reading programs make educational reading activities fun and appealing to young people.



Reading during the summer is important for everyone, especially for children. It helps children keep and improve the reading skills they've developed during the school year. Reading experts note that most young readers suffer a backslide in reading skills during summer downtime. But that does not have to be the case. Families can make reading a priority during the summer months, and children will learn that people never take a vacation from learning.

Some studies have shown that children who continue to read during the summer vacation perform better in the fall when school resumes. Summer reading can help close the achievement gap!

Summer programs are geared for reading for the fun of it. If you can read, thank a teacher. If you love to read, thank a librarian. Libraries are in the business of creating a new generation of readers -- people who are curious and love to read. Summer library programs take advantage of children's natural curiosity to introduce new subjects and different genres -- things kids might not study in school but are interested in.

The following are tips for parents:

- Encourage your child's reading.
- Start sharing books when your child is born.
- Make a time and a place for reading in your home.
- Set a good example -- read on your own.
- Allow your child to select books to read and be aware of your child's reading interests.
- Give books as presents.
- Read the same book as your child and discussing it together.
- Take advantage of "waiting" times to share books -- on trips, at the doctor's office, in line at the grocery store.
- Read at least 10 minutes a day to young children -- it helps them to get ready to read on their own.

When children read what they enjoy, they learn to love reading and become better readers.

Source: Association for Library Service for Children

Employee Assistance Program Services Newsletter

SUMMER 2008

Summer Vacation Tips to Keep Your Home Safe

You've just returned from a two-week vacation to find your home ransacked by burglars. Few things can jolt you out of a relaxed vacation mood more quickly than becoming a victim of crime. Unfortunately, July and August are the highest months of the year for break-ins. To protect your home while you're away on vacation, the following tips can help:

- ⇒ Make your home look lived-in. Leave the blinds open in their usual position.
- ⇒ Install automatic timers to turn lights and radios on and off at appropriate times.
- ⇒ Ask a friend to pick up the mail, or forward it to the post office. Stop newspaper delivery and have someone mow your lawn and water the flowers.
- ⇒ Lower the sound of your telephone and answering machine so it can't be heard from outside. Make sure your voicemail message doesn't imply that you are away.
- ⇒ Ask the police or a friend to check on the house. Let them know where you can be reached in an emergency.
- ⇒ Get involved with a neighborhood watch group. Working with your neighbors to spot trouble is one of the most effective ways to prevent crime.

For more information on how to keep your home safe, call AssistNOW at 216.431.4140. We can help!

Source: www.koin.com

"Ideas are a dime a dozen. People who implement them are priceless"
- **Mary Kay Ash**

Quite a few of our member companies have implemented "Wellness Initiatives" and we'd like to share with you one of the components of the *Jergens* company wellness program designed by Human Resources Director, Kathy Puskas.

Kathy realized how important the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) could be for her employees and she decided to raise awareness about each of the services included in the EAP.

In particular, Kathy wanted to encourage *Jergens* employees to access the interactive AssistNOW website. Kathy was impressed with the wealth of information on this website and was concerned that her employees were missing out on an important resource. Kathy offered her employees a challenge and an opportunity to lower their health insurance premium during the second quarter of 2008. How did she do it?

Kathy challenged all *Jergens* employees to take a tour of www.assistnow.org by accessing the site using their company login information. By directing her employees on how to access and complete a "Skill Builders" exercise, Kathy introduced them to a valuable feature of the AssistNOW interactive website. After taking the Skill Builders quizzes and printing the certificate of completion, each participating employee scanned the completion page and e-mailed it to Kathy. The employees also had the option of bringing the printed completion page to Kathy's office.

The reward for the employee? In addition to the great skills they learned, each participating employee received a \$5.00 deduction off their health insurance premium at the end of the quarter. Seventeen employees accepted the challenge and received their health insurance premium reduction!

Kathy also had some additional information to share regarding her promotion of the AssistNOW EAP. A dozen orientation sessions held during the fourth quarter 2007, familiarized employees with their EAP benefit. This exposure impressed upon the employees the value of the EAP benefit. In particular, employees learned that *all* household members have access to the EAP. Then, during first quarter 2008, AssistNOW presented the popular training program, "Personal Money Management." Approximately 50 employees attended and each received a copy of Suze Orman's book, The Laws of Money, The Lessons of Life.

Kathy believes her efforts have been successful. Employee utilization of EAP services has doubled from the fourth quarter 2007 to the first quarter 2008.

Way to go, Jergens!

If you are interested in logging into the AssistNOW website through your employer, ask your Human Resource Director for the user name and password for your company or call 216/431-4140 for your log-in information. Also, if you have an idea or success story to share -- e-mail pschultz@recres.org).

5 Ways to Stash Cash

Want to really save money? Start by taking a look at how you spend it. The following five steps may inspire you to start saving:

Adjust your withholding. If you receive a tax refund each year, you're giving the government a free loan. Change your withholding, then save the difference in your take home pay.

Consolidate your plugs. Between 5 to 15 percent of the power used by electronics is consumed when they are turned off. Plug your TV, DVD player, cable box and home entertainment system into a power strip or surge protector and unplug it at night and when you are not at home; then start to count your savings.

Audit your bills. Call your wireless provider once a year to make sure that you are on the best plan. Do the same with your cable, internet and telephone service. Bundling all three usually nets a discount.

Quit smoking. Pack-a-day habit? Smoking a pack a day at \$5.00 a pack can cost about \$1,800 a year. That can go right into your savings, not to mention what it saves you on insurance and health care.

Tame your driving addiction. In other words, carpool or use public transportation. This saves on gas, insurance and maintenance costs. If you commute 25 miles round-trip each day, you will save about \$100.00 a month by alternating driving each week with a friend or co-worker.

Source: Readers Digest-2008



Remember,
for confidential assistance call:

AssistNOW

The EAP Division of
Recovery Resources

216.431.4140
1.800.840.4654