

Summer Brain Power

Our philosophy in Active Parenting is that it is the job of the parent, rather than the child, to play the leadership role in the family. As the parent plays the role of a leader, the child plays the role of the learner. This philosophy holds true in the parent's role to lead their children to healthy, educational activities in the summer too. Without guidance from their parents, many kids will choose to spend their time in front of a video game or on the computer. It's important for parents to clarify their own goals for their children's summertime activities and to use effective leadership skills to guide them towards these goals. We can call this "active learning." Active learning calls for active involvement by all the participants. This could include the parent, the children, a babysitter, a day care center or a relative who spends time with the kids during the summer. If the future of our society is our children, then the key to that future relies primarily with parents, teachers and family members. What are some ways you can encourage your kids to activities that supply brain power? Here are a few of our suggestions:

FREE LIFE-CHANGING ONLINE PARENTING COURSES

In these video-based, interactive classes—available 24/7—you'll learn a consistent, encouraging style of parenting that will benefit you and your children for a lifetime. With this self-study course, you have the option of when to participate based on your own schedule and at your convenience. Gain additional insight from your online group leaders as they provide support and feedback.

Choose from four available courses:

- **Active Parenting: First Five Years:** For parents of children from birth to age 5
- **Active Parenting 4th ED:** For parents of children ages 5 to 12
- **Active Parenting of Teens:** For parents of preteens and teens
- **Crossroads of Parenting & Divorce:** For divorced and divorcing parents

Continue your experience as an "active" parent by reviewing what you learn in the class in your accompanying parent guide. Each guide contains additional information, activities, and worksheets to help you practice what you learn.

Visit [ACFCcares.com](https://www.acfccares.com) for more information and to start your Active Parenting journey today.

- **Exercise**

The deep breathing that takes place during exercise oxygenates the blood flowing to the brain. Oxygen helps brain cells work vigorously and efficiently, so exercise may prime the system for learning. Exercise also helps to activate brain chemicals for better attention and memory. Children who are physically fit are more likely to participate in activities such as dance, sports and games. Movement and physical activity is also an important part of learning. Touching, feeling, manipulating and experimenting with the physical world are essential as the foundations for higher-level thinking. You can be a role model by exercising yourself. Make exercise a family priority by participating in physical activities together. Even a short walk in the afternoons or evenings can be a time for talking and sharing the events of your day.

- **Nutrition**

The brain can be as little as 2% of body weight, yet it uses up as much as 20% of the body's energy. Proper nutrition gives your child the fuel to maximize that energy and to perform well physically and academically. It's important to avoid junk food, study food package labels and follow the recommended "[My Plate](#)" guidelines.

- **Sleep**

When children don't get enough sleep, they can become tired and irritable and their performance can suffer. Most experts recommend between 8 and 10 hours a night for children. For a fun activity to do together, read this [informative article](#) about the whys and wherefores of sleep.

Children and adults who maintain a healthy diet and regular exercise program report how amazed they are at how much better they feel.

Now that you have some ideas on how to keep your kids mentally and physically active, it's time to begin setting your summertime goals for your kids. You'll find 100 activities for kids and parents at [VeryWellFamily](#). Whatever you do, make this summer an opportunity for your children to explore the world around them and discover all that they are capable of. The more they're exposed to, the greater chance they will discover what they are passionate about.

To learn more about effective parenting skills, visit the Active Parenting Online Video Library. These helpful videos are offered free of charge by the ACFC in partnership with Active Parenting. Guidance and help are available for parents of children of all ages. To access the Online Video Library, go to the [ACFC website](#), click on the Active Parenting tab, and follow the instructions on how to view the videos.