



# Summer Reading Programs An Initial Conversation

Sponsored by the Faye McBeath Foundation

Facilitated by the Planning Council for Health and Human Services

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11:30—1:30

# Summer Reading Programs

1. What do we know about learning loss or the “summer slide”?
2. What do we know about what works to address it?



# 1. Summer Slide/ Learning Loss

Children who **read during the summer gain** reading skills, while those who do not often **slide** backward.

A conservative estimate of **lost instructional time** is approximately **two months** or roughly **22 percent** of the school year.

Every two or three years, the kids who don't read in the summer **fall a year** behind the kids who do.

**Family income** plays a significant role in determining the magnitude of this **summer slide**.

Students from low-income families...experience an average summer learning loss in reading achievement of **over two months** despite the fact that their middle-class peers make slight gains

# Summer Slide/ Learning Loss

Most students lose about **two months** of grade level equivalency in **mathematical** computation skills over the summer months.

Students who **received books** for summer reading at home show a significantly higher level of reading achievement.

The amount and quality of student's **access** to reading materials is substantively related to the **amount of reading** they engage in, which in turn is the **most important determinant of reading achievement**.

Students who **read more, read better**; they also **write** better, **spell** better, have **larger vocabularies**, and have better control of **complex grammatical constructions**.

Teachers spend at least a month **re-teaching** material that students have forgotten over the summer that could have been spent on teaching new information and skills.

# Summer Slide/ Learning Loss

- The **number of books** read during the summer is consistently related to academic gains.
- Children in every income group who read **six or more books** over the summer gained more in reading achievement than children who did not.



# Major factors determining whether a child reads over the summer

1) use of the public library

2) the child's gender

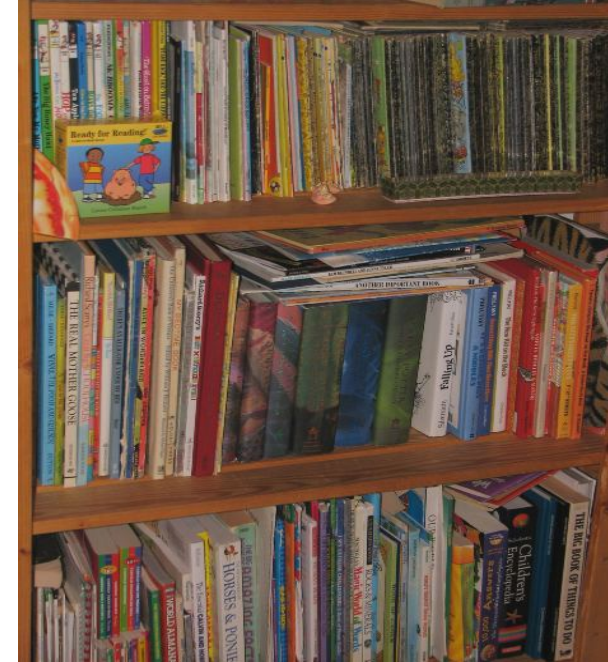
3) socioeconomic status and

4) the distance from home to a library



# Availability of Books

- **Low-income children** have, on average, **four** children's books in their homes.
- **61 percent** of low-income families have **no books** at all in their homes for their children.
- **Public libraries** help close the 'book gap' by providing children of all backgrounds access to high-quality reading materials and rich language experiences.



# Wallace Foundation Study



**Economically disadvantaged youth are more likely to lose ground** in reading over the summer.

**Both lower and higher income students** lose ground in **math** over the summer.

**Academic disparities increase as children grow older**, widening the achievement gap.

**Summer learning programs** are an **important strategy** for narrowing the gap.

Children and youth who would stand to benefit the most from summer learning programs are the **least likely to participate**.



## II. What Works? Best Practices

Those programs with successful outcomes had:

- the early formation of **collaborative partnerships** with key stakeholders
- **specific goals and objectives**
- **qualified staff** with high quality training



# Critical Characteristics of Successful Programs

**1. affordable and accessible**

**2. involve parents**

**3. involve the  
community**



# **Nine Research Based Components of High-Quality Summer Reading Programs**

1. Include readers from cradle to grave
2. Promote a variety of reading and listening formats as additional ways children and teens can participate
3. Promote a variety of genres and diverse content in reading and listening materials

# Nine Research Based Components of High-Quality Summer Reading Programs

4. Engage readers and listeners in **fun activities** that provide the opportunity to discuss the books they are reading and listening to, integrate these books into **real world experiences**
5. Continue **story times** for young children and families
6. Include **English language learners** and children and teens who speak foreign languages

# Nine Research Based Components of High-Quality Summer Reading Programs

7. **Partner with teachers** and school librarians at local schools
8. Reach out to and **partner with local agencies** and organizations that already work with low income and disadvantaged youth
9. **Give away free books** for children and teens to keep and/or provide free library cards to children birth through high school graduation

# Recommendations for Funders

1. **Expand** successful programs.
2. **Extend** successful programs (a school year component)
3. **Improve** successful programs (Focus more on at risk youth, differentiate school year from summer learning, summer learning from summer camp)
4. **Increase** extended school year programs.
5. **Evaluate** summer learning programs

# Your thoughts?

