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NEW YORK, June 3, 2014 /PRNewswire/ As the final bell of the school year gets ready to ring, millions of children across the country are eagerly awaiting a break from homework, assignments and textbooks. Unfortunately, many of them will also stop reading while enjoying their three months of freedom from the classroom. Experts stress the importance of keeping kids reading and using the summer as the perfect time to instill a love of reading that will last a lifetime.

Raising A Reader, a national nonprofit organization that provides resources and guidance for families to implement home-based literacy routines, gives parents the following tips for getting children excited about books and into a regular reading routine during the summer vacation:

- Reading often gets lost in the shuffle of summer activities such as camp, sports and vacation travel. Schedule a regular time to share books with your child and establish a regular routine to ensure reading doesn't become a low priority and has the same importance as other activities.
- If your child wants to see a summer blockbuster movie that is based on a book, read the book with your child first and then let them see the movie as a reward. This also works well with popular movies on DVD. Engage your child in discussions about differences or similarities between the book and the movie.
- Create an outdoor reading area so the whole family can enjoy the summer weather and not feel stuck inside. Children generally read indoors, so being outdoors will create a new environment for enjoying a book and boost a child's enthusiasm for reading.
- Find books that are centered on summer activities he or she enjoys. If your child likes to go horseback riding, for example, find books about horses or stories with horses as an integral part of the plot. This will give a child a welcome change from the types of books read during the school year and better complement their summer.
- If you are taking a trip, read books about your destination with your child before you leave. Do some "research" with them on the location and find things in the area they want to do while visiting.
- If you are taking your kids somewhere for the day, such as a pool, the beach, a picnic or the zoo, pack a book to share and have a reading break or two during day. After an hour or so in the water, your child may enjoy 30 minutes of reading on a comfortable chair or even floating on a raft.

- Create a summer reading challenge with rewards every time a certain number of books is read, or at the completion of a long book. Engage your child in a discussion about the book, talk about what they liked and ask thought-provoking questions such as coming up with a different ending or a new character.

"Many children associate books with school and view reading as work instead of being a source of fun and enjoyment," said Gabrielle Miller, Ed.D., national executive director of Raising A Reader. "It is important to instill a love of books in children at an early age and introduce reading as a pleasurable experience. One way to do this is to establish a regular home-based literacy program that is independent of school, and the summer is a perfect time to start."

Raising A Reader is a 501c3 charitable organization dedicated to helping families develop, practice and maintain literacy habits for children ages 0-8 that are critical for a child's success in school and in life. The Raising A Reader program is implemented through a network of community partners that comprise more than 2,500 locations across the country. Partners include public school systems, libraries, afterschool programs, community agencies and other organizations both public and private. Headquartered in Redwood City, Calif., Raising A Reader was founded in 1999 and has served more than 1.25 million families nationwide. More information is available at [www.RaisingAReader.org](http://www.RaisingAReader.org).

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