



ADOPTIVE PARENT SUPPORT

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

SURVIVING AND THRIVING IN SUMMER



What's Inside ?

5 WAYS TO MAKE SUMMER MORE ENJOYABLE FOR KIDS AND PARENTS:

Listen



On this episode of "The Forgotten Initiative" podcast Kristen Berry, mom of 8 adopted children, talks candidly about the ups, downs and everything in between for summer break

Read



In the blog, "Embracing Summer: Balancing the Joys and Challenges" by the Gladney Group, you'll find explanations, tips and advice for navigating the summer with adopted children.

Watch



Watch this short video from PBS for Parents about the importance of routines for children and for bonus content, click the articles on the same page for more information and advice on how to establish healthy routines.

- 1 Limit Screen Time
- 2 Get Outdoors
- 3 Stay Active
- 4 Don't Abandon Learning
- 5 Keep Routines/Structure

Summer vacation is here—those eight weeks kids love and parents often dread.

The frequent "I'm bored" can be overwhelming, but with some planning, summer can be a time for kids to relax and get ready for school

[Click Here for More](#)

THE LINK BETWEEN STRUCTURE AND MENTAL HEALTH: *FINDING SUMMER BALANCE*



WHY STRUCTURE MATTERS

Kids thrive on predictable routines. When school ends, the sudden shift in structure can create feelings of chaos or uncertainty—especially for children with trauma histories, ADHD, anxiety, or neurodivergent processing.

STRATEGIES FOR CREATING SUMMER BALANCE

Set Daily Routines

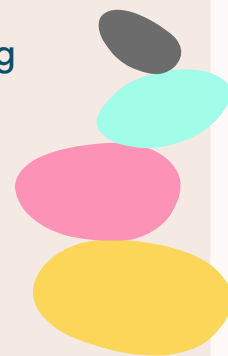
- Use a simple schedule with consistent wake, meal, and sleep times
- Try visual schedules for younger kids or those with executive functioning challenges
- Leave room for unstructured play and creativity

Create Weekly Anchors

- For example:
 - Mondays = Library
 - Wednesdays = Water Play
 - Fridays = Family Movie Night
- These small markers give kids something to look forward to and orient their time

Limit Screen Time with Purpose

- Set clear limits on passive screen use
- Offer screen time as a choice after a healthy activity (e.g., after outdoor time, chores, or reading)
- Encourage co-viewing and discussion to build connection



COMMUNICATE & CO-CREATE THE PLAN

1. Let your child help build the summer schedule
2. Ask what activities make them feel calm, happy, or connected
3. Use this time to practice compromise and communication

SUMMER AND STRESS: SUPPORTING ADOPTIVE FAMILIES WITH BALANCE AND CONNECTION

Tools For Reducing Summer Stress

Help Your Child:

- Talk about stress and normalize their feelings
- Promote open communication about all emotions
- Take “calm breaks” (coloring, breathing, time outside)
- Model how you manage stress yourself
- Set realistic daily goals and celebrate small wins

Help Yourself:

- Say no to overcommitting
- Build in downtime and alone time
- Connect with other parents or support groups

Adoptive Kids May Experience Summer Differently

Children from hard places often react strongly to change—even if it’s “fun” change. Dr. Karyn Purvis emphasizes that children with trauma histories need to be parented differently because their brains are wired by past survival needs.

Summer’s lack of school structure, sensory overload from travel or camps, and shifting expectations can trigger anxiety, regressions, or behavior changes.



Parenting in summer is not about getting it all right—it’s about staying connected and tuned in. If your summer feels harder than expected, you’re not alone. Stress is normal and sometimes, slowing down is the bravest thing you can do.

“Be gentle with yourself. This season can still be joyful, even if it’s not perfect.”

Make Memories, Not Just Plans

1

Children's Aid encourages families to focus on connection over checklists. Try: A backyard campout, cultural cooking night, journaling about summer "firsts", photo challenges or scrapbooking memories together

2

Camps centered on adoption or culture offer more than just fun—they build identity, connection, and confidence. Kids meet peers with similar stories, culture-specific camps affirm identity, safe space to talk about feelings they might not express at home

Did you know? CCAI and The Park offer regional and national post-adoption & cultural summer experiences through **Adopteen, Cultural Camps, & Summer Heritage Tours?** You can learn more about these programs at theparkcommunity.org!

Summer Safety & Sanity

- Hydrate! Especially during outdoor play
- Sunblock is your friend—so is reapplying it
- Watch for signs of heat exhaustion
- Prioritize what matters
- Practice saying no to overpacked calendars
- Schedule your own breaks too

Sources: Seattle Children's & Mayo Clinic:

Need additional support? Contact our post adoption team!



Mid-Summer Reality Check: Back to School Is Coming



As summer winds down, it's easy to forget the little things that set kids up for a strong school start. From encouraging open conversations about school anxieties to making sure lunches are packed with energy-boosting foods, this guide offers a holistic approach to keeping kids healthy in mind and body as they transition into a new school year.

A Back-to-School Wellness Checklist

- Schedule annual wellness checks + immunizations
- Begin adjusting bed/wake times slowly
- Talk about school anxieties with reassurance and openness
- Visit the school or drive the route ahead of time
- Start gathering supplies gradually to avoid last-minute chaos

Normalize back-to-school jitters. Create an open space for your child to voice their worries!



HELPFUL RESOURCES



Summer doesn't have to be chaotic—or rigid. A balanced approach that honors both structure and freedom gives kids the tools they need to feel safe, supported, and engaged.



- **The Link Between Structure and Mental Health: Finding Summer Balance** This article explains how routines support mental health and reduce stress during summer, offering practical tips for families. [Dana Behavioral Health](#)
- **Finding the Balance Between Structure and Nurture** This piece explores the need to balance routine with emotional support, cautioning against over-structuring children's lives. [Creating a Family](#)
- **Raising Children from Foster Care or Orphanages** This podcast with Dr. Karyn Purvis reminds parents that kids from hard places require different, trauma-informed parenting approaches. [Creating a Family](#)
- **Summer Schedules and Why Children Need Them** This blog outlines how structured routines help reduce anxiety and provides a helpful list of stress-reduction strategies. [Brown Health](#)
- **Summer Adventures for Adoptive Families: Creating Lasting Memories** This article encourages connection through shared summer activities that nurture family bonding in adoptive homes. [Children's Aid](#)
- **Adoption Camps: A Primer for Families** This resource highlights the benefits of adoption camps in building cultural identity and peer connection among adoptees. [National Council for Adoption](#)
- **Managing Summer Stress so it Doesn't Manage You** This short read offers stress-reduction techniques for parents navigating summer's unpredictable routines and demands. [Mayo Clinic Health System](#)
- **Summer Safety Tips** This guide provides essential safety tips for common summer risks like sun, heat, water, and outdoor play. [Seattle Children's](#)
- **Preparing for Back to School** This article shares three research-based strategies to help ease children's transition into the school year. [Harvard – Making Caring Common](#)
- **Back to School Checklist for Healthy Kids** This checklist covers key health and wellness prep for the school year, including sleep, vaccines, and anxiety management. [TMH Health](#)

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