



## Know! To Create A Summer Bucket List

For many students, summer break has officially begun. That means a break from having to drag tired children out of bed and a break from all the homework. But most of all, it means a chance for our young people to enjoy a little more fun and relaxation.

For a kid, summer seems to go on forever. As an adult, however, we know how quickly it can fly by. While spontaneity can be exciting and fun, a little preplanning can go a long way in helping our tweens and teens make the most of the summer months.

Research proves time and again that there is power in writing down your goals and refer to them often. So, gather your children, their ideas and get your must-do summer fun ideas on paper.

Creating a Summer Bucket List can be an event in and of itself:

- Set a day and time for the family to gather—sooner rather than later!
- Ask them in advance to start thinking about places they would like to visit and things they would like to do this summer. It can be things they want to do as a family or do with their friends. Of course, you will want to provide some parameters as far as budget and travel.
- Grab a posterboard and some colorful markers—or just pen and paper—either will do.
- Food is always fun to include in the planning process. The family's favorite pizza, fruit smoothies or ice cream sundaes may be just what is needed to get the creative juices flowing.

- Once gathered, ask each person, including the adults, to grab a marker and write down their top three things they would like to include on the summer bucket list then take turns sharing ideas.
- Circle each person's absolute must-do items, then ask everyone to list some additional ideas. If you get stuck, or want to create a little structure around your list, you can ask each family member to include an idea from the following categories:
  - **Volunteer Activity:** Giving back to the community not only feels good, but it also allows young people to see the world through a more caring and compassionate lens. If you need help finding volunteer opportunities, check with your child's school, your local library, your place of worship or other community organizations. Or have your child simply look around the neighborhood and they are likely to find a senior, a busy mom or others who could really benefit from their helping hand.
  - **Learn a New Skill:** School may be out, but their brains still need stimulation. Encourage them to come up with a new hobby, sport, instrument, or art project that they would like to give a try.
  - **Get Active:** It's important to keep those bodies moving, and we're talking more than just fingers on a cellphone. You can ask each person to list a fun activity that gets the whole family moving together, in addition to workouts or exercise they may do alone or with their friends. It could include activities like biking, hiking, jump rope contests, kayaking and canoeing, to name a few.

Once you get your ideas written down and organized, be sure to display your Summer Bucket List in a common area for all the family to see and refer to. Keep in mind, however, that the best laid plans are subject to change; so be flexible. It's also fun to check activities off as you go, so you can look back at the end of the summer on all the fun you enjoyed.

While some downtime and lazy days over the summer months should be expected and embraced, teens remaining engaged and active is important in keeping them mentally and physically healthy. It also will help them to avoid the pitfalls that summer boredom may bring.

In the tip to follow, we will talk more about the specifics of summer boredom and share a boredom busters list you can hang on the fridge for days when your kids need some inspiration.

## Sources

[Gateway Region YMCA: How To Keep Your Teenager Busy During The Summer. Jan 2020.](#)

## About Know! Parent Tips

Everyone has a role in prevention. By reading and sharing this Know! Parent Tip today, you're doing your part to prevent substance misuse and create a healthier world for all.

We created these free parent tips to empower parents like

Prevention  
Action Alliance

Prevention  
Action Alliance

you. Know! helps you promote health and wellness and protect the young person in your life from unhealthy behaviors, including alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use. However, we rely on donations from people like you to provide these tips. If you found this tip interesting or helpful, [please consider donating at preventionactionalliance.org/donate](https://preventionactionalliance.org/donate).

Know! Parent Tips are provided by Prevention Action Alliance with support from the Ohio Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services, the Ohio Department of Education, and Start Talking!.

[Know! Parent Tips are also available in Spanish at the Know! archives.](#)

