

SUMMERTIME ACTIVITY TIPS

*While adolescents do need a break from academics, **structure and continuity** are still important over the summer. Boredom from too much unstructured free time can spark unsafe experimentation -- young people with unsupervised hours are **3 times** more likely to abuse substances and engage in risky behavior. Talk to your kids about their plans and the dangers of **peer pressure**. Have them **check in** with you several times during the day to keep track of their whereabouts and activities. And help facilitate **a different kind of routine** that incorporates some fun and exciting alternatives.*

Brookline High School Peer Leaders and B-PEN (Brookline Parent Education Network) suggest spending time together as a family, preferably outside and away from digital devices. Ask what apps your teens are using and consider conversations about mindful cyber activity, limits on screen time, text-free vacations – those limits can be freeing. Encourage reading, exploring new interests. Other ideas:

- * Get a job (try your own neighborhood – babysit, dog walk, garden chores, etc.)
- * Volunteer (daycare centers, hospitals, youth programs, animal shelters, senior centers, etc.)
- * Check out the Brookline Teen Center
- * Explore the many programs offered by the Brookline Recreation Department
- * Highland Street Foundation’s Free Fun Fridays - <http://highlandstreet.org/index.php>
- * Take a class via MIT’s Educational Studies Program (\$40) - <https://esp.mit.edu/learn/HSSP/index.html>
- * Eureka Puzzles’ Game nights and vacation camps - <http://www.eurekapuzzles.com/>
- * Take lifeguard training
- * Plan family vacations and daytrips
- * Learn to cook – prepare family dinner once a week, invite friends over to fix a meal, bake cookies
- * Sports – league play as well as pick-up games, from soccer to whiffle ball to frisbee
- * Explore area bike trails
- * Visit the Boston Public Gardens and take a ride on the Swan Boats
- * Free concerts and movie nights on the esplanade and in Brookline’s Emerson Park (Wednesdays)
- * Boating/kayaking/canoeing
- * Learn something new (computer course, dance, music, BHS classes) at Brookline Summer School
- * Duck tours
- * Water parks/ amusement parks/carnivals
- * Host a BBQ or potluck
- * Explore Boston -- “WalkBoston” by Robert Sloane (available at local libraries) has great walking ideas around Greater Boston, like the Freedom Trail
- * Take the train to the beach at Wonderland or to Singing Beach in Manchester-by-the-Sea
- * Aquarium/Imax Theater, Museum of Science/Omni Theater, Laser Shows at the Planetarium
- * Museum of Fine Arts, Friday night concerts; ICA free Thursday nights; Harvard Museums
- * Special one-on-one time with Mom or Dad – use your imagination
- * Start a movie or book club
- * Take a trip to Castle Island
- * Organize a game of capture the flag at Lars Anderson
- * Arboretum - rollerblading, walk, picnic
- * Explore Boston Common or Harvard Square -- listen to free street musicians
- * Head to Faneuil Hall Marketplace to see the jugglers, fire-eaters, other free performers
- * Rising seniors – get a start on that college essay – Fall is just around the corner!

For more information on B-PEN or for help starting a Parent Network, contact coordinators June Harris (June_Harris@psbma.org) or Karen Campbell (kcampbell@brooklinema.gov)