

Alaska Deafblind Project



Alaska Center for
Accessible Materials
(AKCAM)

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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"Summertime is always the
best of what might be."

Charles Bowden

Letter from the Editors

Angel Black, AK Deafblind Project Coordinator & Tyler Arsen, AKCAM Coordinator

After a difficult year of homeschooling, quarantine, school's open/school's closed, and feeling up in the air much of the time, I think we can all say, "we're looking forward to summer"! However, summer can be a little daunting trying to come up with ideas to keep our kiddos busy and make sure that they continue to learn! In this newsletter, we'd like to share some ideas that hopefully you'll find helpful.

[Contact Us!](#)

Heading Into Summer

Meaningful summer activities can be a struggle to plan. It can be helpful to make the long summer days enjoyable by planning a daily activity for the week. For example, Mondays are sensory days, Tuesdays are art, Wednesdays are literacy, Thursdays are music and Fridays are toy days. The most important thing to remember is to relax, have fun, and enjoy the moments spent with your child.

“Sometimes you will never know the value of a moment until it becomes a memory.” — Dr. Seuss

Create a Calendar for the Week

A very simple calendar can be created so your child knows what to expect for the day (not to mention it's a terrific way to sneak in a little bit of literacy too). Calendar systems are structured timepieces that help children with deafblindness learn time concepts and vocabulary. When also used as a part of a child's routine teaches them to anticipate what comes next, make decisions about their own schedules, participate in conversations in which they can look forward to upcoming events, all of which provide a sense of security increased independence.

Put meaningful objects that you would like to use that represent the activity in a basket. Cut up a large piece of black flannel board (or black paper, whatever you have laying around). Present the object against the board before the activity starts. Some students may be ready for each object to be attached with Velcro across the board for each day of the week. At the end of the activity, put the object in a basket and the activity is complete!

Resources:

[Calendar Boxes and Schedule Systems](#)
[Benefits of Calendar Systems](#)

Fun with Art!

Art activities can be intimidating because they can be so messy. But they don't always have to be really messy.

Developing a sense of smell is important for children with deafblindness. Their sense of smell is a strong sense that can have a huge impact on the brain. Scent can play a key role in identifying people, places, objects, and activities. We are also beginning to understand the role of scent in relation to children's moods, levels of arousal, emotions, memories, and physical reactions (Rodriguez-Gil, 2004). We know they are all intertwined. Resource: [The Sense of Smell: A Powerful Sense](#)

Scented playdough is a great activity. If you purchase playdough from the store, you can still add scents such as peppermint, cinnamon, or vanilla. If you make it yourself the sky is the limit for scent combinations! Help your child manipulate the playdough. Another choice is to make different shapes from the playdough and play with them together. Create small balls and roll the balls along the

table. Lots of skills being used in these simple activities.

Another great activity is to secure bubble wrap to a paper towel roll. Coat the bubble wrap in paint. Have your child hold each end of the roll, push it forward and roll it backward painting a picture! Marble painting is a classic activity. It's fun and easy to do, has great sounds, and is tactually appealing. Place a piece of construction paper in a shallow box. Place several marbles in the box and pour paint thinned with water over the marbles. Help your child (if needed) hold the edges of the box and roll the marbles from side to side.

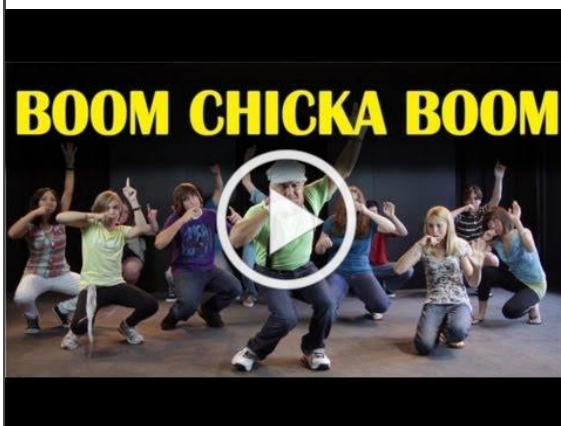
Tactile Experience Books

Deafblind students benefit from direct participation in a wide variety of different meaningful experiences. When they engage in an "experience" they are immersed in a rich learning environment. Students can have experiences at home with their families, outside, visiting a new place, taking a summer trip, or just participating in one of their favorite activities. You can help your child capture and preserve the memory by creating an experience book.



Here is a link to specific instructions on how to create an experience book with your child! [Literacy at Home: Make a Tactile Experience Book](#)

Sing-A-Long Dance Songs



[Summer Dance Songs for Children](#)

[Brain Breaks - Action Songs for Children](#)

[We're Going on a Bear Hunt!](#)

Pete the Cat



[Pete the Cat and His Four Groovy Buttons](#)

[Pete the Cat and His Magic Sunglasses](#)

[ASL Songs](#)



[Baby Language Song ASL](#)

Check out these [Additional Summer Resources](#) available through our SESA Lending Library!

Supporting Summer Literacy

by Tyler Arsen, AKCAM Coordinator

You made it! Congratulations on navigating the uncertain ground that students, teachers, and families alike had to travel upon this year. We recognize the challenges and hardships you faced, and applaud you for your triumphs. As we move toward summer, let's equip our learners with the ability to maintain and build upon the progress that they have made this year.

We've all heard of the "summer slide," a term used to describe academic regression during the summer, a period in which students are traditionally not focusing on academics. The summer slide is a yearly battle for educators as they assign summer reading lists, projects, and activities to keep the minds of their learners active during the break. During this interrupted school year, extended learning is more vital than ever. This article will explore creative ways to engage learners during the summer months to prepare them for the best possible start in the coming year.

Preparing Your Learners

Equip your students with a library card

Community libraries often offer a wide variety of media including books, graphic novels, audiobooks, and digital content.

Plan a trip

Have students use the internet, travel guidebooks, brochures, and maps to plan a dream vacation!

Create a summer scavenger hunt

Exploration and research is a key element in learning. Get creative and modify your scavenger hunt to fit your local area and the age of your learners!

Paired Pen Pals

Writing pays off. Pair students up and give them the opportunity to write each other letters over the summer. This is a great literacy and community-building activity.

Sidewalk Chalk

Parent approved, provide students with a colorful pack of chalk and allow them to create art and build fine motor skills.

Summer Reading Tips for Families

- Point out print in the natural environment: food labels, toys, traffic signs
- Sing songs, recite short entertaining poems, play rhyming word games
- Encourage older children to read with younger children, improving the confidence of the older learner, and the vocabulary of the younger learner
- Leave books, magazines, graphic novels, newspapers, etc. around the house. Let your learner see you reading
- Play word games, ask thought-provoking questions

Engaging Literacy Apps for Struggling Readers

Follow the links provided to explore these fun options for maintaining literacy this summer!

[Homer](#) delivers playful learning across subjects, building skills through lessons and activities.

[Speakaboos](#) is designed to introduce children to reading through interactive stories.

[Mad Libs](#) is the classic fill in the verb/noun/adjective game, with hints provided to promote confidence and success.

[Reading Raven](#) helps your children learn to read with their own personal reading adventure guide!

Remember!

The [SESA Library](#) contains a wide variety of large print books available to support readers with low vision, specific learning disabilities, and other reading challenges. Feel free to browse our collection to find a title that best suits your learner's reading level and interest! Contact our Librarian, [Anne Freitag](#), for more information.



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