## **Nguide** summer

## Factors to Consider

**BEFORE CHOOSING A** UMMER **J**AME

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When the outdoors beckons, road trips can be the perfect way to see the countryside, escape the routine of daily life and enjoy short vacations. When taking to the open road, it is important to focus on safety. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration says that planning and prevention can spare road-trippers from the consequences of breakdowns, traffic accidents or other road emergencies.

#### STOCK EMERGENCY PRE-PAREDNESS ITEMS

Prior to a trip, drivers should make sure their vehicles are equipped with necessary safety items. Liberty Mutual Insurance New Beginnings Report warns that nearly half of Americans do not check that proper emergency items are stored in their vehicles prior to getting on the road. Before embarking on a road trip, make sure vehicles have a first aid kit, flashlight, water bottles, phone chargers, tire-repair tools, flares, jumper cables, towels, and even an old backpack for storage.

#### SCHEDULE A SERVICE CALL

Regular maintenance can keep vehicles from breaking down. Drivers should take their cars in for tuneups before long road trips. Such tuneups should include an oil change, battery check, tire rotation, and any other necessary servicing.

#### **PLAN YOUR ROUTE**

Map out the route before heading out. Be aware of potential road closures, obstacles or construction. Thanks to real-time GPS updates through mobile phones and other devices, some drivers like to rely on tech to get them through. But it's important to realize service may be spotty in rural areas. Mapping a trip out in advance can save drivers from getting lost during mobile service interruptions.

#### JOIN A ROADSIDE REPAIR SERVICE

Breakdowns happen even if trips are carefully planned. Automotive clubs can help drivers when breakdowns occur. Some car manufacturers also include roadside assistance in warranty packages, so inquire about your coverage.

#### **AVOID DISTRACTIONS**

Keep children and other passengers occupied so they are not a distraction to the driver. Set out with favorite music, books, video games, or even a pad and paper for doodling. Pack snacks to keep everyone feeling full in between roadside pit stops. Drivers also can load their cars up with tissues, water and music to limit distractions. Before embarking on a road trip, make sure vehicles have a first aid kit, flashlight, water bottles, phone chargers, tire-repair tools, flares, jumper cables, towels, and even an old backpack for storage.



#### REFRESH DEFENSIVE DRIV-ING SKILLS

A safe-driving course can remind drivers of the rules of the road. In some cases, courses also may qualify drivers for discounts on their auto insurance policies. One such class is the AARP Driver Safety course.

### PLAN FUN BREAKS ALONG THE WAY

Breaks give drivers a reason to rest and passengers an opportunity to get out and stretch their legs. The Roadside America smartphone app lists must-see stops along any route, and drivers can plan their own stops as well.

#### **STAY OVER IF NECESSARY**

According to the NHTSA, driving while drowsy is a contributing factor in 100,000 accidents every year. Drive only when well-rested. Share driving duties or plan a night at a motel so everyone is well-rested.

Road trips are all about fun, but drivers must emphasize safety before and during such excursions.







GREATER VISION COMMUNITY CHURCH Rev. (Dr.) David G. Reynolds, Pastor 2000 E Stan Schlueter Loop • Killeen, TX 76542 Phone: 254-200-4382 • Email: gvcc@greatervisioncc.org Adults often look back fondly on their childhood experiences at summer camp. Camps can provide the opportunity to form lifelong friendships and discover rewarding hobbies that can enrich campers' lives for decades to come.

Choosing a summer camp is no small task, as the options at families' disposal range from overnight camps to weekday afternoon camps to camps that specialize in certain programs, such as music or dance. Cost also is likely to factor into families' decisions, as the American Camp Association notes that cost can vary greatly depending on which camp families choose. For example, the ACA notes that the average daily fee at a resident camp is \$85, while the same fee at a day camp is \$43.

When looking for a summer camp for kids, families should make the decision together. Kids should be involved in the selection process, as they're more likely to have an enjoyable camp experience if they had a say in where they will be spending their summers. The following are some factors families should consider as they look for summer camps, courtesy of the ACA.

1

### **Kids' interests**

The ACA urges parents to consider the child's interests and personality before choosing a summer camp. Parents might want their children to attend the same summer camp they visited as youngsters, but each child is different. Just because mom and dad liked a particular camp does not mean their children will.

The ACA notes that summer camps should align with children's interests and maturity level.

## session length

Camps may last as little as one week or up to a couple of months. Session length should be considered by families looking at both local day camps and overnight resident camps.

Parents who want their children to enjoy a largely schedule-free summer might not want to commit their children to lengthy camp sessions, even if those sessions are close to home.

If parents think their children can benefit from the same structure they're accustomed to during the school year, then an overnight camp that stretches for several weeks might be what they're looking for.

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Locale may only be a consideration for families con-

sidering overnight camps. Kids will likely be familiar

with the locations of local day camps, but overnight

Kids who love the ocean might benefit from ocean-

front camps that focus on marine biology, boating

or other activities involving the water.

In the same vein, youngsters who like camping and hiking might be more likely to embrace camps located in

mountainous regions.

camps might be set in mountain ranges, near the ocean or environments less familiar to youngsters.



Youngsters play in the water at the Family Aquatic Center at Lions Club Park in Killeen on opening day Memorial Day weekend.

Fun times at the local water parks are just around the corner. Area pools are set to open for the season on June 1 and the Family Aquatics Center at Lions Club Park and Long Branch Pool

will open Memorial Day weekend.

The Family Aquatics Center hours will be 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. May 25, 1 to 6:30 p.m. May 26 and 11 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. May 27.

Daily admission at the aquatics center is free for children ages three and younger, \$5 for children ages four to 16 and senior citizens ages 55 and older, and \$7 for adults ages 17 to 54. Long Branch Pool will be open May 25 through May 27 from 11 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. with a daily admission of \$2 for youth and seniors and \$3 for adults.

Pools will close against May 28 through 31 and reopen June 1 for regular summer season hours. Both facilities offer season passes and may be rented for private and special events.

Swim lessons are registering now. Sessions last two weeks and are \$45. Morning and evening times are available June 4 through August 9.

For more information on all City aquatics programs and facilities, call 501-6537 or visit KilleenTexas.gov/Swim.



## **POOLSAFEN** starts with prevention

Pools make some backyards the places to be in late spring and throughout summer. Lazy summer afternoons are a lot more enjoyable when they're spent in or alongside a pool, and kids tend to say "I'm bored" with considerably less frequency when a pool is within arm's reach.

Pools are certainly fun, but they're only as fun as they are safe. According to the USA Swimming Foundation, between Memorial Day and Labor Day in 2018, at least 148 children younger than age 15 fatally drowned in swimming pools or spas. While those figures represented a 9 percent decline from the year prior, 148 deaths is still 148 lives lost too early.

Pool safety need not come at the expense of summer fun. In fact, homeowners can employ various preventive measures to reduce the risk of pool-related accidents on their properties.

#### INSPECT GATES AROUND YOUR POOL

The International Code Council<sup>®</sup>, a member-focused association dedicated to the construction of safe, sustainable, affordable, and resilient structures, advises homeowners to inspect all pedestrian gates in the barrier fences around their pools. Such gates should be self-closing and self-latching, as both features ensure gates are always closed. In addition, the ICC recommends padlocking other gates around the property.

#### REMOVE OBJECTS AROUND PEDESTRIAN GATES

Kids can climb up on chairs, tables, large toys, and other objects left around pool gates to gain access to pools even when their parents aren't looking or even home. Such items should be removed.

#### INSTALL AUTOMATIC OR MANUALLY OPERATED POOL COVERS

Pool covers can effectively prevent access to pools, spas or hot tubs. At the end of each pool session, cover the pool, even during the height of summer when pools are used daily. The minor task of covering the pool is worth the considerably lower risk of accident or injury if pools remain uncovered.

#### **INSTALL A POOL ALARM**

Pool alarms can alert homeowners to accidental or unauthorized entrance into the water. The ICC recommends installing such alarms while noting that they should not be considered a substitute for barrier fences or safety covers.

Summer afternoons at the pool can be made much safer by adhering to a few safety tips.



## How to Instill a Love of Reading in Youngsters

Reading is a rewarding activity that can benefit people throughout their lives. A great way to pass time on a summer day at the beach, reading also can provide a host health benefits, some of which may surprise even the most avid reader.



According to a review from the Cochrane Library, a scientific review board in the United Kingdom, mentally challenging tasks may be beneficial for people with mild to moderate Alzheimer's disease. Mental stimulation improved scores on memory and thinking tests for people with dementia.

But the benefits of reading are perhaps even more profound for children. The University of Michigan C.S. Mott Children's Hospital notes that reading and writing skills can help children perform better in the classroom and even benefit them down the road in their professional lives. When children read, they develop skills such as phonemic awareness, which is the ability to hear, identify and play with individual sounds in spoken words. Reading also can help kids develop their vocabulary and reading comprehension skills.

As much as parents promote reading to their youngsters, getting kids to embrace reading can be difficult. That may be especially true today, when children have distractions like tablets, phones and social media competing for their attention. Parents who want to make reading part of their family lifestyle can try these tips, courtesy of the C.S. Mott Children's Hospital.

**Turn off your devices.** The AAP says children youngster than 18 months should be discouraged from using screen media other than video chatting. Children between 18 and 24 months of age should only use digital devices together with their parents. For children older than two years of age, screen use should be limited to no more than one hour per day. Turning off these devices and promoting reading limits kids' exposure to digital media while providing a perfect opportunity to read.

**Set an example.** Children mimic their parents' behavior. Kids who see their parents reading books, magazines and newspapers may be more likely to embrace reading than youngsters who do not see their parents reading. **Read as a family.** The C.S. Mott Children's Hospital notes that reading together with children is a wonderful way for parents to foster a language-rich environment in their families. Reading can open lines of communication between parents and children, providing a chance for them to discuss books and their themes.

**Visit the library.** A trip to the library can help children discover books that align with their interests. Such books may serve as a catalyst for a love of reading in youngsters.

A love of reading can benefit youngsters in numerous ways. Parents can try various strategies to instill a love of reading in their children.

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