

HUFFPOST EDUCATION

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Celebrating National Summer Learning Day Every Day

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Most of us know **June 21** as the longest day of the year and the first official day of summer.

But the 21 of June is also a call to action in support of our children and youth -- [National Summer Learning Day](#), a nationwide celebration of the importance of summertime learning and the effectiveness of summer learning programs in preventing [summer learning loss](#) and engaging students in meaningful educational enrichment activities during the summer months.

While **summer learning** is worthy of a daylong celebration, it's also such an important contributor to children's academic achievement, health and well-being that we should champion it not only on June 21 but throughout the summer months. Anyone affected by and interested in our children's education should be thinking about, planning for and supporting summer programming on a consistent basis. In much the same way that after-school programs are now widely recognized as vitally important to children's academic achievement, summer learning programs deserve to be equally valued as an integral part of the whole educational experience for children.

Like most states, California's children are vastly underserved by summertime learning programs, with only 27 percent of California students taking part in any kind of summer learning program and the vast majority of low-income children unable to participate due to economic circumstances and lack of local programs.

In a [new research report](#) commissioned by the [Wallace Foundation](#) and published by the [RAND Corporation](#), summer learning loss is shown to be **cumulative over the course of a student's career** and to **further widen the achievement gap** between low- and upper-income students.

In California, the [Partnership for Children and Youth](#) is marking National Summer Learning Day with a flagship event at our state capitol.

Hundreds of middle school students will descend on the California State Capitol building, video cameras in hand, seeking to interview lawmakers ranging from Governor Jerry Brown to Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson to dozens of state legislators and other local community leaders. The students will conduct interviews about the importance of summertime learning and broadcast their videos via their favorite social media channels, such as [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#), and on [summermatters2you.net](#).

After putting these lawmakers on the record about summer learning, the students will picnic in Capitol Park with lawmakers, teachers, parents, media and local business, civic and nonprofit leaders, enjoy an outdoor science lesson from [State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson](#) (a former science teacher) and discuss ways to expand summer learning opportunities across the state so that more children -- especially low-income children -- can benefit from summer learning programs.

Partnership for Children and Youth will bolster these student news crews' advocacy efforts via channels such as [summermatters2you.net](#), Twitter and Facebook.

We invite parents, educators, civic leaders and lawmakers in and outside of California to tune in and see how children and youth make the case on National Summer Learning Day for why summer learning matters. Visit the National Summer Learning Association to find Summer Learning Day activities in your own community and lend your support. Thank you, and enjoy National Summer Learning Day!

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