

## Summer Reading: A Child's Choice

Summer in New Jersey is a time for vacations and relaxing. Even children need some time to structure their own lives and take a break from moving at everyone else's pace. Some children see summer as a welcome break from school that includes a break from reading, something they think is a school related activity. If that's true of your children, it's important to show them reading can be done strictly for pleasure.

Studies show that children who engage in summer reading perform better when they return to school. You can encourage children to read by observing their interests and supplying material for them to read, without forcing them to read it. If your child is interested in basketball, look for publications and news stories about the teams and the players and make it available for them to read. Don't wait for them to ask for the material. Some children don't know what's available for reading material. If you have a preteen who is interested in the latest fashions and trends, pick up some of the magazines geared toward that age group. Leave the sports section open to interesting stories. If your child loves music, get a subscription to Billboard Magazine. There are publications associated with almost every hobby.

You can also have your child read by having board games available that require



reading or building toys that have directions in them. Or how about that cereal box with the jokes or the fun facts on the back. Don't forget the funnies in the Sunday paper or the recipe for making your favorite summer lemonade.

Your goal is to keep your children reading over the summer. Any way you can get them to pick up a book, newspaper, magazine, comic book or even a crossword puzzle is fine. Some of your children will come home with Summer Reading assignments. Those lists are often made up by school librarians and will have a wide variety of choices. Allow your children to choose their favorites. On the following pages you will find the Programs for Parents Reading List divided by subject. Read the list with your children and have them choose or visit the library or bookstore and let them browse on a regular basis.

## Programs for Parents Summer Reading List

### Summer Stories

#### **Those Summers** by Brandenberg Aliko

If you're an adult who has spent carefree summers at the beach, this book will elicit those beautiful memories. Share them with the children you love and take a beach field trip so they can make summer memories of their own. (Preschool - Grade 2)

#### **One Hot Summer Day** by Nina Crews

Summer is no less memorable if you live in the city. Fire hydrants, hot steamy neighborhoods, shadows on the sidewalk and dancing in the cool rain are memories etched in the minds of children who grew up in the city. (Preschool - Grade 2)

#### **The Hayloft** by Lisa Westberg Peters

Every child has a favorite summer spot. For two sisters who live on a farm, it's the hayloft, where they play, dream and sleep on warm summer nights. (Grade K - 3)

#### **Henry and Mudge in the Green Time** by Cynthia Rylant

The best part of summer is when we stop checking the time. Henry and his dog Mudge appreciate that time in the park, playing with the hose and just enjoying the walk up a big green hill. (Grade K - 3)

#### **Class With the Summer Birthdays** by Dian Curtis Regan

Brittany's class is grouped by age and all share summer birthdays. While other classes get to celebrate with cupcakes, they miss out. Brittany has a solution to the problem that involves sharing birthdays. (Grades 2 - 4)

#### **Julian's Glorious Summer** by Ann Cameron

Julian's friend has a new bike and his fear of falling is keeping him from riding. Embarrassed by this, he tries to hide the problem from his friend, which results in all sorts of deceit. A great story that helps children find resolutions to their problems. (Grades 1 - 4)

### Mysterious Stories

#### **Mystery** by Arthur Geisert

A piglet and her grandfather uncover clues to solve the disappearance of some paintings. The reader can use the illustrations to piece together the clues. (Ages 3 - 8)

#### **Detective LaRue: Letters from the Investigation** by Mark Teague

Ike Larue may have flunked obedience school, but this dog has super sleuthing talents. He's in a jam right now because he's been arrested for stealing the neighbor's cats. Ike must do his super sleuthing from a jail cell and get himself off the hook. (Ages 3 - 7)

#### **Nate the Great Mysteries** by Marjorie Sharmat

Nate, a child detective in his trench coat and Sherlock Holmes hat, solves many mysteries in this popular series of early reader books. (Grades 1 - 3)

#### **Something Queer is Going On** by Elizabeth Levy

Jill's basset hound has disappeared and Jill and Gwen must follow the trail to rescue him. Their sleuthing results in a visit to the set of a dog food commercial shoot. (Grades 1 - 3)

#### **How to Disappear Completely and Never Be Found** by Sara Nickerson

A twelve year old girl seeks the truth to her father's disappearance four years earlier near a Pacific island. (Ages 9 - 12)



## Programs for Parents Summer Reading List

### Sports Stories for Girls and Boys

#### **Honus and Me** by Dan Gutman

Joey loves baseball. But he just doesn't play well, until he finds a Honus Wagner baseball card. Joey's just glad to have found the most valuable card in the world, until he realizes it possesses powers more valuable than its monetary worth. (Early Chapter Book)

#### **Forward Pass** by Jill Winston

Can girls play football? Well, yes they can play, if they want to. But can Jill Winston overcome the issues brought up by her place on the football team? While the story is about a girl playing wide receiver, the problems it brings up are universal. (Grades 5 - 7)



#### **Winners Never Quit** by Mia Hamm

Little Mia was a great soccer player, but when there was even an inkling of struggle, Mia quit. Young athletes learn why being part of a team is more important than scoring points. The simple text is supported by pencil and watercolor illustrations. (Preschool - Grade 3)

#### **Clemente: The Passion and Grace of Baseball's Last Hero** by David Marinis

It seems hard to find stories about great men who play a great game. This is a biography about Roger Clemente, the first Latino elected into the Baseball Hall of Fame, who died delivering humanitarian aid to Nicaragua after a devastating earthquake. (Young adult)

### Funny Books for Reluctant Readers

#### **Captain Underpants Series** by Dav Pilkey

Adults first pick up this book and wonder if it's appropriate reading material. Well, if you want your child to read and he thinks Captain Underpants is funny, then by all means, encourage your child to read about this irreverent super hero who saves the world in his tidy whities. (Grades 1 - 4)

#### **Calvin and Hobbes** by Bill Waterson

The antics of Calvin and his stuffed tiger, Hobbes, are illustrated in a comic strip format that reluctant readers may be attracted to. Pictures help struggling readers through the text. (All ages)

#### **Chuck and Danielle** by Peter Dickinson

Chuck is Danielle's sensitive and timid pet Whippet. He is simply afraid of everything from flushing toilets to stuffed animals. But Danielle loves him and is supportive of her pooch no matter what. (Grades 4 - 6)

#### **Poetry** by Jack Prelutsky

Any of Jack Prelutsky books are attractive to children, especially those who proclaim their hatred of reading. They can read the poems in short snippets of time and best of all be entertained. The poems are also helpful for those who struggle to read because of their predictable rhyming nature. (All ages)

#### **Jennifer Murdley's Toad** by Bruce Coville

This toad is no ordinary pet. He talks, perhaps too much. A bit of light science fiction fantasy for those who may be interested in not so real life.

(Grades 2 - 6)



## Programs for Parents Summer Reading List

### Science Fiction and Fantasy

**Aliens Ate My Homework** by Bruce Coville  
Rod isn't happy in school because he's constantly bullied. While working on a science project, little aliens invade his room searching for an evil alien. Could the very person who has been bullying Rod be the evil alien they're searching for? (Grades 1 - 4)

**The Wonderful Flight to Mushroom Planet** by Eleanor Cameron  
This book has been in print and a favorite since the 1950s. Two boys build their own rocket and fly to the planet Basidium. While not as sophisticated as today's science fiction, the sense of adventure continues to delight children of all ages. The first in a series of adventures. (Grades 2 - 6)

**Ender's Game** by Orson Scott Card  
The earth has been attacked by aliens. Ender, a six year old genius, is being trained in the art of war. But can he use his skills to save the planet? The first book in an ongoing series. (Grades 5 - 9)

**The Hobbit** by J.R.R. Tolkien  
The Hobbit is one of those classics that should be read by all. Bilbo Baggins is a comfortable hobbit until Gandalf the wizard drops by and shakes up his life. Reprinted with larger print and margins, with Tolkien's illustrations, this story is ready to delight a new generation. Also a great read aloud for grade school children. (All ages)

**The Dragon Machine** by Helen Ward  
George is seeing dragons everywhere he looks. He sees dragons in purses and in the sewers. Everyone else appears to ignore the dragons, just like they ignore George. The dragons need help and George is the one to save them, but he must build a dragon to lead them on their way. Perfect for your youngest fantasy lovers. (Preschool - Grade 3)

### Celebrating Diversity

**Different Like Me** by Lori Mitchell  
A young child notices the differences in all the people around her. With a child's wisdom, she compares them to all the different flowers in her Grandmother's garden that are different but also very much the same. (Grades Preschool - 3)

**Friends from the Other Side (Amigos del Otro Lado)** by Consuelo Mendez  
Prieta, a young Mexican American girl, helps a young boy after he moves into Texas with his mother searching for a new life. (Grades Preschool - 3)

**Uncle Jed's Barber Shop** by Margaree King Mitchell  
It took Jed 79 years to realize his dream of owning a barbershop, but he never stopped trying. Troubling financial and political times didn't stop his dream from becoming his reality. The powerful paintings match the strength of Uncle Jed's character. (Grades Preschool - 3)

**Through My Eyes** by Ruby Bridges  
While much has been written about Ruby Bridges, none can tell the story like the six year old who actually experienced the day that changed education in America. Ruby Bridges makes us understand the experience as she did through her innocent eyes. (Grades 1 - 6)

**Henry and the Kite Dragon** by Bruce Edward Hall  
Henry Chu lives in China Town. He loves flying beautiful kites. One day some boys from another neighborhood destroy his kite and then his grandfather's by throwing stones. Henry and his friends confront the boys and learn there's a reason for the stone throwing. A compromise is made allowing the two cultures to live side by side peacefully. (Grades K - 4)

# All About Your County

## Essex County Environmental Center Comes Into Its Own

In 1955 the NJ Park Commission began acquiring land stretching across six miles of the Passaic River starting at Bloomfield Avenue and ending at South Orange Avenue. In 1972 The Center for Environmental Studies was established and flourished until 1995 when it closed due to lack of funding. Last Spring The Essex County Environmental Center reopened and promises to be a center for environmental education for all ages. To date there's Garibaldi Hall, a meeting room, fishing and boating areas, a green house and gardens, an interpretive trail and picnic areas. Classes for children and families will be offered all summer through the Audubon Society. These classes are offered at the Eagle Rock Avenue site and at Essex County Riverbank Park on Market Street in Newark. The following is a list of Summer Camps available to children:

### Swallowtails: Ages 4 and 5

Bugs and Butterflies Week July 10-14

Gardening Week July 17 - 21

### Peepers: Ages 6 and 7

Reptiles and Amphibian Week July 24 - 28

Forest Habitats Week July 31 - August 4

### Blue Jays: Ages 8 and 9

Birds Week August 7 - 11

Ecosystems Week August 14 - 18

This is a wonderful resource for children, educators and families. Residents should celebrate its revival. Call the number below for a complete list of educational classes and activities or just visit, picnic and enjoy nature.

Essex County Environmental Center  
621 Eagle Rock Avenue  
Roseland, NJ 07068  
973-228-8776

## Rollerskating in Branch Brook Park

Toddlers and pre-schoolers can experience in-line or roller-skating in the safety of their own toddler area at the United Skates Arena in Branch Brook Park. Rent or bring your own equipment. Call for Summer scheduling.

United Skates  
7th Avenue and  
Clifton Avenue  
Newark, NJ 07104  
973-482-8900

## Did You Know?

Branch Brook Park is on the Registry of Historic Places. It was the first county park created in the United States.

# NAEYC Regional Seminar Coming To NJ

## A New Standard of Excellence: What You Need to Know About NAEYC's New Early Childhood Program Standards and Accreditation Criteria.

NAEYC is bringing valuable training and information to regional sites across the country this year. Due to popular demand NAEYC has added a seminar location at the Hyatt Regency in New Brunswick, NJ on Friday, August 4. Now here's your chance to get full information on the changes and how they will impact your program. These events have sold out in other U.S. cities. Register Now! Visit the NAEYC Web Site for full information and to register:

<http://www.naeyc.org/seminarseries2006/>

## Turtle Back Zoo

The Turtle Back Zoo is a great place for toddlers and preschoolers who may be overwhelmed by a big trip to the Bronx Zoo in NY. Plan to spend a few hours, have a picnic lunch and head home. The following are special Summer Activities:

### July 7, July 18, August 3 and August 23 - Night Moves

Take a guided night time tour through the zoo to learn about the nocturnal animals all around you. Don't forget to bring your flashlight.

### July 16 - Red, White and Blue Zoo Day

Eagles, cougars, bison and bears - what do they all have in common? Go on a treasure hunt to find the answers. Visit the animal discovery table and listen to the Diamond Dixieland Trio.

### August 10 - Wildlife Workshops "Awesome Adaptations"

Learn about animals that adapt to their environment.

Classes require pre-registration: Call or visit the Zoo at:

**The Turtle Back Zoo**  
560 Northfield Avenue  
West Orange, NJ 07052  
973-731-5800

## WARMLINE

Providing you with practical, accurate information on health, behavior issues and regulatory information relating to the children in your care.

**1-800-713-9006**



### Directory

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973-744-4050

Newark Office  
973-297-1114



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