



For Immediate Release

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***Summers Matter: 10 Things Every Parent, Teacher, & Principal
Should Know About June, July, & August***

Matthew Boulay, PhD, founder of the National Summer Learning Association, publishes the first book exploring the 'summer learning gap'

Baltimore, Md. –The summer months are often the most problematic and challenging time for children, families and communities who may lack access to engaging and educational activities that keep kids active and learning. In the first book to be published on this topic, author Matthew Boulay, PhD, founder of the [National Summer Learning Association](http://www.summerlearning.org) (NSLA) – the only national nonprofit exclusively focused on closing the achievement gap by increasing access to high-quality summer learning opportunities – offers key insights to help families and kids transform their summers. The e-book is slated to be published by Amazon on June 1st.

“How do we keep our children safe and supervised when schools are closed but adults still have to work? How do we preserve the academic gains that children achieved during the school year? Parents and teachers across the country have wrestled with these questions for decades,” says Boulay. “The good news is that researchers have quietly amassed a mountain of evidence documenting why summers matter and what we can do as parents and educators to help our children during the months when schools are closed. In short, we now know beyond a shadow of a doubt that what our children do during their summers has a long-term and significant impact on their academic achievement and life chances.”

According to Jane Sundius, PhD, the former Director for the Education and Youth Development Program at the Open Society Institute-Baltimore, “Matthew Boulay’s book explains clearly why ‘Summer Matters’ and what can be done to enrich summer for American children. It should be on every parent’s summer reading list!”

Summers Matter translates the most compelling research into accessible tips and guidance for parents, teachers, and principals on how they can integrate summer learning programs

into their own schools and communities – regardless of income or access. Boulay notes that the “summer slide” affects 50 million school children and is one of the most significant causes of underachievement in America. This is particularly true for children in elementary schools and further exacerbated for children from low-income communities.

He also outlines the distinction between schooling and learning, “Out-of-school learning experiences can be extraordinarily positive and stimulating...Summer can be a time for students to build robots, keep journals, perform plays, create art, listen to stories, explore nature, and ask questions,” he states.

Boulay also encourages parents to explore summer activities offered by organizations such as the YMCA and Boys and Girls Clubs of America and think of summers as a time to customize our children’s education.

According to Boulay and the NSLA, every summer, low-income youth lose two to three months in reading achievement, while their higher-income peers make slight gains. Most youth lose about two months of grade-level equivalency in math skills in the summer. Year after year, these losses accumulate. By fifth grade, the cumulative years of summer learning loss can leave low-income students almost three years behind their peers. In fact, more than half of the achievement gap between lower- and higher-income youth can be explained by unequal access to summer learning opportunities. Half of the e-book’s proceeds will be donated to benefit the National Summer Learning Association and programs to support summer learning opportunities.

NSLA identifies and disseminates what works in the summer space by advancing national best practices and equipping towns, cities and counties to provide summer learning opportunities, meals and job training to all youth. NSLA convenes community stakeholders multiple times per year, providing professional development to summer providers, producing and curating valuable resources, and generating public awareness through events such as National Summer Learning Day on July 14.

For more information, visit www.summerlearning.org or amazon.com.

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The National Summer Learning Association (NSLA) is the only national nonprofit exclusively focused on closing the achievement gap by increasing access to high-quality summer learning opportunities. NSLA recognizes and disseminates what works in summer learning, develops and delivers capacity-building offerings and convenes and empowers key actors to embrace summer learning as a solution for equity and excellence in education. For more information, visit www.summerlearning.org

Matthew Boulay is the founder of the non-profit National Summer Learning Association and co-editor of two books on summer learning. A former elementary school teacher in New York City, Boulay earned a PhD in Sociology and Education from Columbia University’s Teachers College, and was recently named one of the 25 most influential people in out-of-school time learning. He lives in Oregon with his wife and two children.