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By Megan Walsh-Boyle



Summer Brain Gain?

According to the Johns Hopkins University's Center for Summer Learning, all young people experience learning losses—especially in reading and mathematics—when they do not engage in educational activities during the summer. Yeah sure, but how can academics compete with the beach and pool?

TV to the rescue! No one is encouraging children to watch more television during June, July and August (although, according to 2008's Nielson ratings, they do), but rather make sure what they are tuning in to keeps them learning while having fun. The Smart Television Alliance is a great resource for parents and caregivers, offering suggestions for TV series that can benefit children's growth and development.

Among the recommendations by the STA is the PBS preschool cartoon *WordWorld* (airs weekdays; check your local listings for times). Deemed by a recent U.S. Department of Education study as an effective literacy tool, the Emmy-winning show prepares and teaches little ones how to read by helping them recognize letters, sound out words and spell. Co-creator Don Moody tells *TV Guide Magazine*, "We are proud to be one of the educational tools supported by the Smart Television Alliance, and we will continue to be a resource to parents and kids during the summer months as they work to maintain a healthy and educational media diet." So basically, there's no need to feel bad letting children indulge in summer's sweetest treat: brain food!

For more TV suggestions that are healthy for young minds, check out the Smart Television Alliance Web site:

<http://www.smarttelevisionalliance.org/>

