

## July 2022

### **7/11/22: Cure for your Summertime Blues**

For many people, summer is the best time of year with all kinds of fun in the sun. For some, however, it can be kind of a bummer. During school, children are immersed in a world of friends and activity but that all changes during the summertime. Mentally stimulating activities are a must for school-aged kids during summer to curb depression, keep them motivated and happy, and uphold their mental health.

I'm Clarissa Moon with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension here with your Moon Minute. If you think that you or your child suffer from the summertime blues, try these tips that are geared toward a healthy body and mind.

Bored? Try one of these:

- Paint rocks
- Make cards or bookmarks for gifts
- Write a story or poem

Hungry? Try one of these:

- Fruit kabobs
- Make frozen yogurt or popsicles
- Cookie cutter sandwich

Sad? Try one of these:

- Grab an empty jug, poke some holes in it and attach it to the garden hose. Then play in your makeshift sprinkler!
- Have a hula hoop or dance competition
- If it's too hot to do anything outside, make a fort or box maze inside your house!

I hope that these ideas can offer a cure for your summertime blues. If you want to learn more, check out [communityreachcenter.org](http://communityreachcenter.org) or [panola.agrilife.org](http://panola.agrilife.org).

<https://www.communityreachcenter.org/blog/mental-health-summertime-habits/>

### **7/18/22: Summer Family Activities**

This summer, focus on family! Take time to reconnect before the hustle and bustle of school begins again. I'm Clarissa Moon with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension here with some suggestions.

### Activities

1. Grow your own food- this lets kids be involved in the meal process from farm to fork. Plus, they will be more likely to try a new food when they've had a hand in growing it.
2. Make food art with colorful fruits and vegetables.
3. Food critic activity- let kids take the lead and pick out a new food they want to try. Let them play food critic and talk about the color, texture, and flavor.
4. Restaurant activity- let the kids be the chef. They can design a menu and prepare a dish themselves!

### Mealtime tips

1. Remove phones and tv's away from the table.
2. Have everyone share what they did that day- what were the high's and low's that they experienced?
3. Try new foods and persevere. It sometimes takes several exposures for kids to be brave enough to try something new.
4. On nice days, try eating outside or packing a picnic for a change of scenery.

I hope you these ideas inspired you to try something new and reconnect with your loved ones this summer. Learn more at [myplate.gov](https://www.myplate.gov) or [panola.agrilife.org](https://panola.agrilife.org)

<https://www.myplate.gov/life-stages/families>

## **7/25/22: Summer Fruit & Veggie Hacks**

Summer is here and it's the best time of year to find many kinds of fresh produce! Make the most of it, prolonging the shelf life of some of your favorites with these tips. I'm Clarissa Moon here with your Moon Minute.

- Be kind to your citrus fruit and don't hurt its peelings! Get your kitchen smelling fresh simmering the peels in some water or simply running them through the garbage disposal.
- Prevent browning on apples, pears, avocados or potatoes by brushing citrus juice or olive oil on them. Wrap tightly and put in a sealed container.
- Don't wash produce until you're ready to eat it. If you wash produce and don't let it dry completely- this can actually speed up the ripening process and help mold grow.
- Store in air-tight containers such as mason jars to prolong freshness.
- Don't forget to freeze produce as well! This makes for great smoothies or toppings for oatmeal, among other things

I hope these tips can help you savor the taste of summer! For more info visit [fruitsandveggies.org](https://fruitsandveggies.org) or [panola.agrilife.org](https://panola.agrilife.org)

<https://fruitsandveggies.org/stories/summer-fruit-veggie-hacks-to-reduce-waste-stretch-your-food-dollars/>