

Wellness Articles

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If you would like to be added to the distribution list for these articles, please email: Rebecca.johnson2@albertahealthservices.ca. You will receive a monthly email containing articles for the upcoming four weeks.

An archive of past wellness articles is available at <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/9966.asp>

Proposed publication date: August 27, 2018

Content provided by: [Apple Magazine Summer 2018 Edition](#) - Written by Alex St. Cyr

Alberta Health Services (AHS) knows that wellness matters, and this year AHS has been asking our people and Albertans, 'What's your balance?' Throughout the year of wellness and finding balance, AHS is highlighting different areas of wellness.

Join the Conversation on social media using the hashtag **#AHSWhatsYourBalance**.

Summer reading is fun, easy and skill-building

Keeping your child's reading level builds confidence in the classroom

Summer holidays ... they may only be 60 days long, but for many kids that can be long enough to lose some of their reading and literacy skills. It's known as summer lag.

Every fall, teachers see students return to classrooms with a noticeable drop in their reading levels. That drop can be as much as a full reading level below where they were in June.

"You don't want kids to lose their momentum. One summer off of reading can have years of impact, depending on the child," says Rebecca Ibbotson, a Grade 1 and 2 teacher at Silver Springs School in Calgary. "While they're in school, there's a lot of self-esteem and confidence tied into whether you can read or not. When these kids become aware of a decline, it's very hard on their self-esteem. Many students are reluctant to get back into reading after falling behind."

Ibbotson says reading and literacy don't have to be "all or nothing" during summer holidays.

She says reading for as little as 15 minutes a few nights a week helps a child keep their reading skills. And it can be fun and easy. Playing games such as I Spy, listening to



audiobooks during a long drive, having children make up and tell stories and simple spelling bees are just a few of the activities both young and older children can do to build reading skills.

Older children may like to read and talk about a novel with a parent. And some parents balance screen time with book time: to play on the iPad or a video game, their child has to put in the same amount of time reading.