

# COMMUNITY HEALTH

June 2015

*The YMCA of Martha's Vineyard is a non-profit, cause-driven, charitable organization that relies on the generous support of friends like you.*

## WE'RE FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

## SO OUR KIDS CAN ENJOY NEW, FUN & EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

### Keeping Kids **LEARNING;** **Nature For Your Health**

So they can get up, get out, and grow.

"Summer Learning Loss." The academic world is abuzz with this concept. It refers to the regression of children's literacy and mathematic skills over the summer. Studies show that students score lower on standardized tests at the end of the summer than on the same tests at the beginning. The summer break interrupts the continuity of learning and this loss extends into the first two months back in school. Students forget what they learned over the school year and learning skills become sluggish.

A lack of summer learning opportunities puts children at risk of losing academic skills and knowledge. Summer Learning Loss particularly affects children from lower-income households. These students lose an average of 2 ½ months of reading skills during the summer. Children who fall behind their peers early in life find it difficult to catch up, and studies show graduation rates are four times higher among students who read proficiently by the third grade than for those who don't.

So what is the solution? Most parents and almost all children are against making the school calendar year-round. While some academics advocate extending the school year, scientists have determined that more time in school doesn't necessarily translate into more learning. In fact, it may simply mean more fatigue. Kids need time off. And they need to have fun.

Summer is a time for children to explore the outdoors and build friendships while on bikes, at the beach or on the athletic field. In addition to exercising their bodies, it's important for children to keep their minds active during the summer months.

Studies show that summer camp, either sleep-away or day camp, can be effective in counteracting Summer Learning Loss. Although the learning environment is structured differently than a traditional classroom, children remain engaged. They participate in activities that require problem-solving skills and they learn without the pressure of tests and grades.

According to Kelly Neadow director of the new Camp Terra Mare summer program at the YMCA of Martha's Vineyard, "camp is so much more than child care. We let the kids have fun, but remind them of the lessons they learn along the way."

Camp Terra Mare's extensive list of activities and field trips include journaling and a "Curiosity Science" program that ties into the camp's weekly themes. Campers also have access to a small library if they choose to spend their time reading.

The campers are exposed to new skills and ways of thinking, which can help build confidence. For students who have problems with certain concepts, new learning approaches can contribute to a more beneficial experience. "Maybe in math class they sit at the back of the room and don't know what's going on," Kelly explains, "but when they do the 'Human Knot,' they can take charge and lead the group in figuring out how to get out of it."

By offering Summer Learning Loss prevention initiatives and integrating literacy exercises into Camp Terra Mare, the Y helps children stay mentally engaged throughout the summer.

### TERRA MARE: LAND AND SEA

Camp Terra Mare provides a special opportunity to explore the many ways in which experiencing nature strengthens our well-being. While fresh air and a scenic landscape can do wonders for our moods, did you know spending time outdoors can help to improve not only our mental health but our physical health too?

Outdoor play allows children to connect with nature, use their imaginations, and have fun while being physically active. According to the National Wildlife Federation, children today spend half as much time outdoors as they did 20 years ago. Yet studies show, kids who play outside are more physically active, more creative in their play, less aggressive and show better concentration.

As part of our commitment to the Partnership for a Healthier America's Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Standards, Camp Terra Mare provides children with opportunities for moderate to vigorous physical activity each day, whether it's playing a game of ga-ga, testing out their skills in archery, sailing on the Black Dog Tall Ships or kayaking with Island Spirit Kayak Rentals. At the Y, we believe spending time outdoors can help children build health in spirit, mind and body.

Consider these benefits of experiencing a little more nature and how it can help improve your family's health and well-being:

- Outdoor play increases fitness levels and builds active, healthy bodies.
- Spending time outside raises levels of Vitamin D, helping protect children from bone problems, heart disease, diabetes and other health issues.
- Getting outside improves distance vision and lowers the chance of nearsightedness.
- Exposure to natural settings may reduce symptoms of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).
- Students in schools with environmental education programs score higher on standardized tests in math, reading, writing and listening.
- Children's stress levels fall within minutes of seeing green spaces.
- Play protects children's emotional development,

Camp Terra Mare begins on June 29 and extends through August 21. To learn more about our camp and the fun we have in store for your child this summer, visit us online at [www.ymcamv.org](http://www.ymcamv.org) under the link Camp Terra Mare Summer 2015, where you can also find registration forms, parent packet and more information.

Y FOR ALL Financial Assistance is available for Camp, funded through the generosity of Y donors. For additional information, contact Kelly Neadow at [camp@ymcamv.org](mailto:camp@ymcamv.org) or 508 696-7171, x 115.



### UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

#### Summer Program Registration

Members: June 15-25

Non-member: June 19-25

#### 5/26-6/23 Vocal Fitness

10:30-11:30am

FREE drop-in class, ages 55+  
Presented by Heidi Carter

#### 6/2-6/25 Teen Group Training

2:30-3:30pm

FREE for members- \$10 nonmember

#### 6/3 Breastfeeding Café 11am-1pm

FREE FOR ALL

#### 6/5 All Ages Community Open Stage at Alex's Place, \$5, 8pm

#### 6/6 Crafternoons with Child Watch

Ages 2+, 2-5pm Fee: Members \$20/  
child; \$15/siblings Non-members \$25/  
child; \$20/siblings

#### 6/12 Lifeguard Certification Course 6-7pm (prerequisite swim)

#### 6/12 Middle School Dance 7-10pm

Grades 6-8 ONLY, Alex's Place;\$5

#### 6/13 Lifeguard Certification Course 9am-5pm

#### 6/13 Table Tennis Tournament 7pm

FREE with Prizes

#### 6/14 Lifeguard Certification Course 9am-5pm

#### 6/16 Oak Bluffs Eighth Grade Graduation Party at 6pm

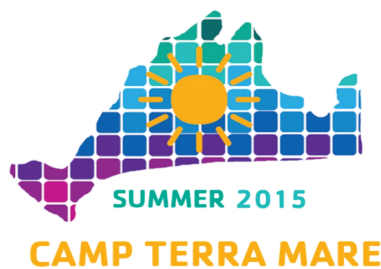
#### 6/19 All Ages Community Open Stage at Alex's Place/\$5, 8pm

#### 6/27 First Aid, CPR, AED Course, 9am-12pm

**View our full program guide  
online at [www.ymcamv.org](http://www.ymcamv.org)**

## WHAT DO NEARLY 300 KIDS DO AT THE Y CAMP?

### GROW.



**YMCA OF MARTHA'S VINEYARD**  
**Swartz Family Facility**  
Home of Alex's Place

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