

Helping Your Child with Hunter syndrome Retain Skills Over the Summer

As summer approaches, many families look forward to a break from early mornings, packed lunches, and school routines. But for parents and caregivers of children with Hunter syndrome, summer can also bring anxiety, especially around maintaining the hard-earned skills and knowledge their child has gained during the school year.

The "summer slide" is a common concern for many families, but for those navigating the progressive nature of Hunter syndrome, it can feel more urgent. While we can't stop the clock, we can create opportunities that help reinforce skills, strengthen connections, and support joy-filled growth.

Here are some thoughtful, manageable ways to help your child retain skills and keep their minds and bodies engaged this summer:

Make Learning Playful

Instead of formal lessons, try to build learning into everyday fun:

- **Sensory play:** Water tables, kinetic sand, or frozen toys in ice help build fine motor skills.
- **Music and movement:** Dancing to songs with hand motions encourages memory, motor planning, and speech.
- **Story time:** Even if your child is nonverbal, looking at picture books together builds connection, vocabulary, and comprehension.

Tip: Repeat familiar songs, books, and activities. Repetition helps with memory and comfort.

Lean on Technology (When It Helps)

Many children with Hunter syndrome benefit from apps and devices designed to support communication, motor skills, or cognitive games. Some caregiver favorites include:

- Proloquo2Go or TouchChat (AAC support)
- Endless Alphabet
- Super Simple Songs on YouTube
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Use tech intentionally. It's not about screen time guilt, but making it work for your child's needs.

Keep a Simple Routine

Children with Hunter syndrome often thrive on routine. Keeping consistent wake-up times, mealtimes, and structured parts of the day helps create predictability and reduce anxiety. Include time each day for play, learning, rest, and movement. Even a basic visual schedule can go a long way in making summer days feel safe and structured.

Maintain Speech and OT Goals at Home

Talk to your child's therapists before summer break. Ask for:

- A simple summer "home program" with 1-2 exercises you can easily do at home.
- Video models or laminated visuals you can follow.
- Tips for incorporating therapy into everyday life (e.g., using mealtime for requesting items or brushing teeth as an OT opportunity).

Use Everyday Tasks as Skill Builders

- **Cooking together:** Practice sequencing, following directions, and sensory exposure.
- **Shopping or errands:** Work on social interaction, patience, and labeling objects.
- **Outdoor walks:** Practice naming items, making choices, and taking turns.

These tasks can be educational and bonding.

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Let's Learn from Each Other

- What has helped your child maintain or grow skills over the summer? Share your ideas and successes in the comments. Your experience could encourage another family.
- You are not alone on this journey. Together, we can make this summer one of joy, connection, and resilience.

Don't Forget Emotional and Social Skills

Even brief, simple interactions can help with social development:

- **Schedule short playdates with patient peers or siblings.**
- **Practice greetings and turn-taking during family meals.**
- **Offer choices throughout the day ("Do you want to wear your red or blue shirt?").**

Give Yourself Grace

You are not expected to recreate a classroom at home. Some days will be hard. Some days your child may not engage and that's okay. What matters most is the love, safety, and attention you provide. Connection is more important than perfection.

Resources You Might Find Helpful

- [Hunter syndrome Resources - Project Alive](#)
- [Summer Fun & Learning Packet - Understood.org](#)
- [Assistive Technology Tools - BridgingApps](#)
- [Inclusive Summer Activities & Camps](#)



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