

# Summer Sticks!

Summer is coming! How can you adjust the Sticks System to help maximize those summer months? Here are some ideas to help you plan!

## How to use Sticks for summer:

What goals would you like to see your kids meet this summer? Think about this in several areas: Physical, Social, Spiritual, and Academic. Some specific ideas we have used:

- ◆ Physical: Our children have used these months to develop sports moves that will help in team sports, learning to do a summersault, learn to climb a tree, etc...
- ◆ Social: Some kids need more time connecting with others, some need less. What does your child need? Can you plan playdates or require family time?
- ◆ Spiritual: Would you like your child to start daily devotions? Memorize Bible passages? What matters to you in this area?
- ◆ Academic: What are some things you would like your kids to learn? Think creatively! How about the planets in order? The names of the continents? The multiplication tables? Set a goal!

Once you have goals set, list them for your kids to see. We use a dry erase board. Decide how many Golden Sticks each goal will be worth and let your kids work toward that goal to earn those Sticks.

## Structuring your days:

- During the summer, we add Sticks to each child's cup. Make sure that these are not all chores but are also play Sticks, goal Sticks, help Sticks, etc...
- We like to have Sticks that are specifically assigned to morning, afternoon and evening. To tell the Sticks apart, we use a permanent marker to color the top of the Stick green (morning), yellow (afternoon), and red (evening). This helps kids to know what Sticks have to be done by what time. In our family, we like morning Sticks to be done by lunch, afternoon Sticks to be done by dinner and evening Sticks to be completed before bedtime.
- Assign areas of your home to each child (of appropriate age) to keep tidy each day. (living room, hallway, bathroom, family room, etc...) These Sticks can switch among children weekly and offer needed help with chores.
- Consider giving a Lunch Stick to older kids who can help prepare lunch for those who are home each day.
- If you have several children, use Sticks to pair up siblings for tasks or for play during the summer months.

In using Sticks to give summer structure, you will find that you feel freer to connect with your kids in new ways. You will have time to come alongside them to read a book, run through the sprinkler or marvel at the sky because the details of your daily life will be happening naturally and without excessive management. Enjoy this time! Feel free to play or to relax or just to enjoy your family!