

Family Activity:

Summer Wish List and Calendar

This Family Activity is an opportunity to plan and dream for the summer together as a family. Making a Summer Wish List and Calendar offers families the chance to both make memories together in the summer and practically plan for changing schedules. This practice builds **executive functioning skills** like planning and organizing for children and supports family mental wellness by creating shared memories and **summer rituals**.

Take time to brainstorm events and rhythms of the upcoming summer together. After gathering materials, bring the family together. Explain that you will be preparing for the upcoming summer by decorating and making a special summer wish list and a calendar together. Share that this will help them look forward to summer plans and know what to expect during the summer. Invite their input to make and decorate the list and calendar. Include family faith practices and prayer rhythms. Simple ideas like popsicles on a certain day of the week after dinner or a sandwich picnic after Sunday Mass can turn into cherished family traditions and memories.



■ **Materials:**

- Two posterboards or larger pieces of paper
- Art supplies such as markers and colored pencils
- Stickers and other items for decorating

■ **Place:** The family home. Once the activity is complete, consider placing the wish list and calendar in a shared space where family members can see it during daily routines.

■ **Time Investment:** This can be flexible depending on the ages and abilities of children. Consider allotting around 15 minutes for wish list brainstorming and around 30 minutes for creating the calendar. *(If helpful, parents can create the calendar ahead of time so children can decorate it.)*

■ **How Often:** Once to create the calendar, but you can revisit the calendar weekly or however often is most suitable for your family.

■ **Why:** Summer brings changes in routines that can be unsettling both for children and parents. Creating tools such as calendars helps family members visualize upcoming plans and know what to expect. Knowing that there are plans and rhythms in place may help children navigate the changes with increased comfort.

■ **Level Up:** Use specific stickers or drawings that signify different activities to help children not yet reading begin to understand the purpose of the calendar.