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CONTACT:
Cher Murphy
press@alcatrazeast.org
571-263-2128



Tips for Parents to Help their Kids Avoid Summer Brain Drain

The Alcatraz East Crime Museum, located in Pigeon Forge, helps parents keep their kids learning in a fun and unique way

PIGEON FORGE, Tennessee (June 13, 2018) –Some people call it summer brain drain, others call it the summer learning loss. No matter what you call it, experts tend to agree that most kids tend to lose some of what they have learned over summer break. In fact, the Brookings Institution reports that a child loses around a month’s worth of school year learning over the course of the summer. When school starts back, the backslide may become a challenge for some kids because their classes haven’t accounted for the loss in learning. The good news is there are things parents can do to help their kids avoid the summer brain drain!

“Keeping kids actively learning over the summer months is important so that their minds stays sharp and they remain in learning mode,” says Janine Vaccarello, chief operating officer for Alcatraz East. “We get many parents who bring their kids into the museum as a way to sneak in some learning in a fun environment during vacation.”

Here are some ways that Alcatraz East helps keep kids learning all summer long:

- **Safety** – Being at home over the summer, kids often have more unsupervised time on their hands. The safety stops in the museum are sponsored by the National Crime Prevention Council and the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children and help kids learn about Internet safety, cyberbullying, and interacting with strangers on the phone or at home.

- **History** – While it may not seem like history, kids and teenagers have little or no memory of the events of 9/11. The 9/11 Gallery at the museum gives parents the opportunity to share their first-hand accounts of this historic and life-changing event. Adults and children alike have been sharing their memories on the museum’s 9/11 remembrance wall, and you can, too.
- **Science** – Did you know that the fingerprints of children are chemically different than those of adults which causes them to disappear faster? Kids can explore the world of forensic science and scan their fingerprint to see if they are a loop, arch, or whorl.
- **Careers in Service** – The Law Enforcement Gallery covers the different jobs in law enforcement and the tools used to keep our communities safe. Kids can learn about what it takes to join the force and try their hand at driving a police car driving simulator. Displays also include Neighborhood Watch and the origins of 911 call centers.
- **Fun** – Don’t forget just straight up fun is important too! Kids and adults alike love The Heist laser maze, where you see who in your family is best able to slip past a security system.
- **Additional learning** - Once you visit the museum, take note of the things your child takes an interest in. Then stop off at the local library and find books and movies on those topics. This will help them continue the learning once they get home, by giving them a chance to explore the topics more. You can also give them projects to do based on the things they have chosen to learn more about, that include writing, reading, art, and creating crafts and models. If they’re in the Boy or Girl Scouts, check out the Alcatraz East website for when forensic workshops for badges are offered.

“Kids often thrive when they are exposed to new experiences, which creates great learning opportunities,” added Vaccarello. “This summer, be sure to expose your kids to new things. Bring them into the museum, giving them a chance to have fun as they continue learning, and avoid the summer learning setback.”

At the Alcatraz East Crime Museum, children can learn about pirates, legends of the old west, famous cold cases, what a police lineup is like, how to solve crimes, and what it takes to be a police officer.

The Alcatraz East Crime Museum is located at the entrance to The Island, at 2757 Parkway in Pigeon Forge. They are located near the Margaritaville Hotel and Paula Deen's Family Kitchen. The museum offers a wide array of crime information, including notorious crimes and criminals, historic artifacts, interactive exhibits, crime scene investigation, crime detection and fighting, and information on how help avoid being a victim of crime. There are also many activities that are kid friendly, such as learning to tie knots and how to crack a safe. Items currently on display include the O.J. Simpson white Bronco from the infamous police chase, and outlaw Jesse James' holster.

General admission tickets are \$14.95 for children, \$24.95 for adults. Group ticket sales are available. The museum will be open 365 days per year, from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., with the last ticket sold 60 minutes before closing. For more information and to purchase tickets, log online: www.alcatrazeast.com.

About Alcatraz East

Alcatraz East is the most arresting crime museum in the United States. Guests of all ages can encounter a unique journey into the history of American crime, crime solving, and our justice system. Through interactive exhibits and original artifacts, Alcatraz East is an entertaining and educational experience for all ages - so much fun it's a crime! This family attraction is located at the entrance of The Island, located at 2757 Parkway, Pigeon Forge, TN. For more information, visit www.alcatrazeast.com.

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Source:

Brookings Institution. *Summer learning loss*.

<https://www.brookings.edu/research/summer-learning-loss-what-is-it-and-what-can-we-do-about-it/>

