

WATERMARK KIDS
SIGNIFICANT
SUMMER
TRANSFORMING TRADITIONS
2017

Dear families,

SUMMER IS OFFICIALLY UPON US...

along with all the potential and dreams of what could be for your family. For many, vacation plans are made, camps are on the calendar, and/or goals are set for summer projects. The possibilities for these months are endless.

While all of these things can be good, far too many people come to the end of the summer months and wonder silently, "Did we accomplish anything significant?" Our hope is that this resource you hold in your hands will equip you to avoid that question altogether and enable you either to begin or to continue traditions that will be transformative in the life of your family.

THE CHALLENGE

The Watermark Kids Team wants to challenge AND equip you to have a "Significant Summer" this year. We believe that there are four basic components to making your summer significant: Rest, Serve, Grow, and Play. As the old saying goes, if you aim for nothing, you'll hit it every time. Don't aim for nothing this summer. These four components, along with their simple definitions and memory verses, will provide you a target to aim for. We have also included some basic suggestions on how to hit that target.

This summer, we are challenging your family to transform your summer traditions by reclaiming the extraordinary. Special times of year like summer, holidays, birthdays, etc. are extraordinary moments that offer families opportunities for making or keeping traditions. Since a tradition can be defined as "something you always do that transforms who you are or are becoming," our hope is that you might reclaim these traditions so they have the goal of transforming your family more into the image of Jesus.

HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

For the eight weeks of Significant Summer, we are reclaiming one "National Day of . . ." each week to encourage your family to either Rest, Grow, Play, or Serve together. As you join in on these "extraordinary" days, we hope it causes you to think about the traditions you have for other extraordinary days and think how you can make the most of them for the sake of eternity.

In addition to these specifically scheduled challenges, we've provided a number of other ideas in each of the four categories that your family could implement this summer. We hope these might become summer traditions that transform your hearts and the hearts of your kids for God's Kingdom.

MAKE IT SIGNIFICANT!

In 2 Peter 1:3, Peter reminds us that we have been given everything we need for "life and godliness." Then he challenges us to make every effort to build onto our faith with qualities that "will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 1:8, NIV) We hope you'll accept a similar challenge from us this summer, to battle ineffectiveness and unproductiveness and make your summer SIGNIFICANT for the glory of God and the fame of Jesus our Savior.

Let's have a SIGNIFICANT SUMMER.

Watermark Kids Ministry Staff Team



REST – Remembering Who Reigns

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

Matthew 11:28-30



SERVE – Showing Others God’s Love

“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve others and give His life as a ransom for many.”

Mark 10:45



GROW – Becoming More Like Jesus

“Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on His law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.”

Psalms 1:1-3

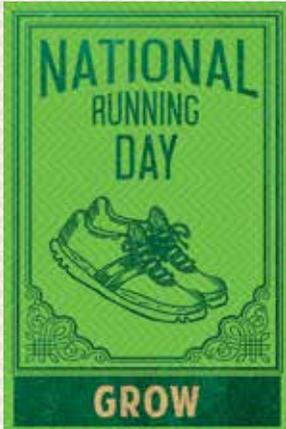


PLAY – Enjoying God Everywhere

“You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.”

Psalms 16:11

JUNE CHALLENGES



GROW

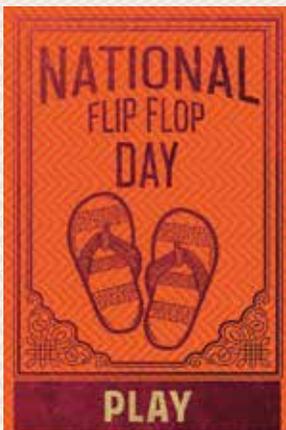
NATIONAL RUNNING DAY (JUNE 7)

CHALLENGE: Take a family walk/run one day this week (hurry before it gets too hot) in honor of National Running Day. To make it more fun, consider running little mini-races along the way (sibling vs. sibling, kids vs. dad, running backwards, etc.). During your walk/run, talk about what it takes to be a GREAT runner (i.e. training, discipline, practice, skill, nutrition, etc.). Ask your kids why they think someone would want to be a great runner (trophies, sports, fame, money, recognition, health, etc.) After your walk/run...

READ: 1 Corinthians 9:23-27

TALK:

- According to 1 Corinthians 9:25, how are Christians like runners? (Runners have to exercise self-control and are running for a prize.) How are they different? (Runners' prizes are temporary; the Christian's prize is forever.)
- According to 1 Corinthians 9:26, how do Christians NOT run? (Aimlessly, without purpose.) What is the purpose or aim of our lives as Christians? (See v. 23 for an answer and talk about what it means.)
- **ACTION:** Like athletes train to win the prize, Christians train so that they can win the prize of knowing God better and becoming more like Jesus. **Set goals for members of your family for ways you want to grow in your relationship with God this summer.** Some ideas might be reading a section of Scripture daily (see jointhejourney.com), memorizing verses or a passage of Scripture, and praying for a specific need or area of growth. Share those with each other, and then hold one another accountable this summer and encourage each other along the way.



PLAY

NATIONAL FLIP-FLOP DAY (JUNE 16)

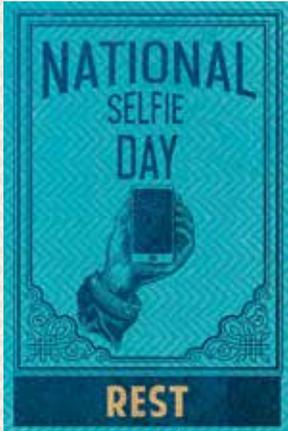
CHALLENGE: First, grab some flip-flops. (Find some you already have, buy some at the dollar store, or cut-out some paper ones.) Then get paper, scissors, a pen, and your Bible. You will cut the paper into strips and write a Bible verse on each strip of paper. You could write some verses like: Philippians 2:3-4, Luke 6:45, John 14:27, Philippians 4:4, or other verses your family might know. Make sure to write at least two different verses for each child. In this challenge, you will be playing a game of freeze tag, but with your flip-flops. You will tag each other with the flip-flops, and to become unfrozen, you must either recite a Bible verse from memory, or read off two Bible verses from the ones you wrote down. As the game goes on, you can re-read some of the verses from the strips of paper, but challenge yourself and your kids to recite some from memory.

READ: Romans 12:2

TALK:

- What does it mean to conform to the pattern of this world? (Breakdown this phrase with your child, and as you do so, use the flip-flops as an example. We don't want to flip-flop back and forth between what the world tells us is right, and what God tells us is right.)
- How can we be transformed by the renewing of our minds? (By reading and memorizing God's Word.) With your child, pick a new Bible verse you all want to start memorizing together.
- How will we be able to test and approve God's perfect will? (Because we sought the Word, and His Word is His perfect will.)
- Pray with your child that God will help your family memorize and write more of His Word on your hearts so that your minds will be transformed.

JUNE CHALLENGES PART 2



REST

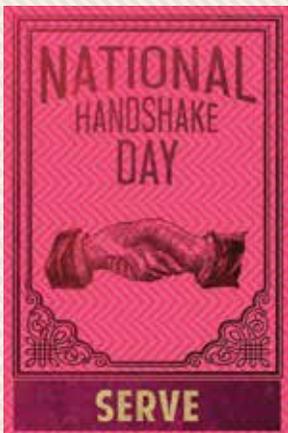
NATIONAL SELFIE DAY (JUNE 21)

CHALLENGE: This is a great day for rest. Gather the family together, grab a picnic blanket and/or hammock, and head outside to a park, a lake, or even your backyard. Each family member gets to choose a different “face to make” or “pose to be in,” for a family selfie. As you are laughing at how funny each of the pictures are, take some time to read James 1:19-25 as a family. Just as a selfie is a picture showing a reflection of what you are doing, think through ways that you have been both a hearer and doer of God and His Word.

READ: James 1:19-25

TALK:

- Remind your kids that being a follower of Christ is more than being hearers of the Word. What does it mean to be a doer of God’s Word?
- Parents, take some time to encourage ways you see each of your children reflect Jesus uniquely. Be as specific as possible.
- Ask each family member what they would like to do in the future that would show the reflection of Christ and figure out a way to make that happen.



SERVE

NATIONAL HANDSHAKE DAY (JUNE 29)

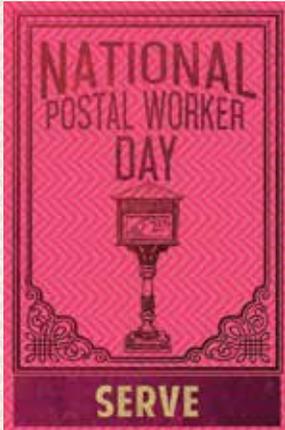
CHALLENGE: Choose five neighbors (different houses) to go over and give a fun handshake to. Wish them a happy handshake day and then come up with a fun handshake. Ask them if there is any way you can give them a “hand” to help them out. (Take out the trash, wash some windows, pick up dog poop in the backyard, give them a haircut, wash their car, and the list goes on).

READ: Matthew 20:26-28

TALK:

- Did it feel weird asking people how we could serve them? Why or why not?
- What did Jesus come to do? How did He serve us? That is super humbling to think about.
- What are some ways that we can have the mind of Jesus and serve others by giving a helping hand? With neighbors? At home? Other places?
- Have each family member think of ways they can serve others around them over the next few weeks. Make a list and do them.

JULY CHALLENGES



SERVE

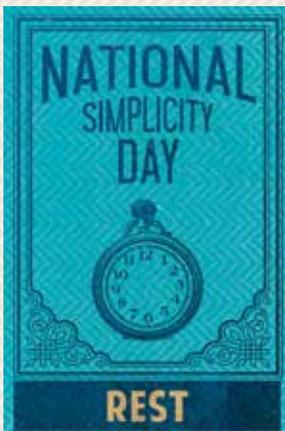
NATIONAL POSTAL WORKER DAY (JULY 1)

CHALLENGE: Serve your postal worker this week by leaving a treat and a note in your mailbox. The person who delivers your mail every day works hard and is not someone we think about saying thank you to very often. Use the occasion of National Postal Workers day to tell them thank you and that Jesus loves them. Have the kids help prepare a special treat, then make thank you cards for your letter carrier. Put it all together with a bottle of cold water (their job is especially hot in July.) in your mailbox. Be sure to pray together as a family for your mail carrier.

READ: Matthew 25:34-40

TALK:

- In this passage the King is rewarding His followers for acts of service they did. Are the acts of service big things or little things? (They are little in that they are easy to do – feeding someone, giving someone a cup of water, visiting someone who is sick.) Is the reward a big or little reward? (It is big! Inheriting a kingdom is a HUGE thing!)
- The reward is big because Jesus says that when we serve others, especially those we might not think are that important, we are actually serving Him. Does understanding that we are serving Jesus when we do simple acts of kindness make us want to serve more often or with a different attitude?
- Discuss some ways your family can serve others this summer – who can you feed, provide cold water to, or visit?



REST

NATIONAL SIMPLICITY DAY (JULY 12)

CHALLENGE: Whether you have an hour, evening, or all day, put aside your “to do” lists and get ready to rest and connect. Here are some ways to keep your time SIMPLE:

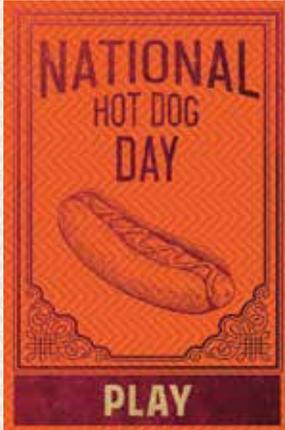
- Stay in your pajamas longer than normal
- Invite each child to pick a “simple” activity to do as a group (i.e. read a book aloud, play cards/board game, nap, crossword puzzle/word find, tell silly stories, joke time)
- Make a blanket and pillow fort
- Put away your electronics and unplug
- Leave the time unscheduled with no places to be
- Eat simply without a lot of fuss or preparation

READ: Matthew 11:28-30

TALK:

- Ask your kids if they know what being weary means. Talk about ways you can feel weary at times.
- Share that while this SIMPLE time gives us physical rest and relaxation, Jesus gives us the ultimate rest and true peace as we trust in Him and give Him our burdens.
- Ask your kids if there is anything that discourages them, and pray with them to give those burdens to Jesus.

JULY CHALLENGES PART 2



PLAY

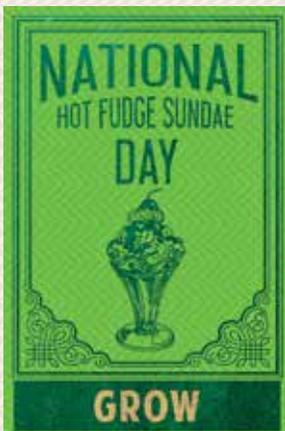
NATIONAL HOT DOG DAY (JULY 19)

CHALLENGE: Get your family, community group, or neighbors together for a hot dog grill out. Play kickball, whiffle ball, washers, horseshoes, etc. Enjoy cooking out and playing with friends and family this week. Remember, enjoy eating your hot dogs, just don't act like one.

READ: 1 Corinthians 10:31 & Philippians 2:3-5

TALK:

- As you're playing games, you'll notice that some will be better than others. It's easy to celebrate when we do something awesome. We like when we get attention or accolades for our excellent abilities. But when you're playing, look for opportunities to encourage and praise the people around you.
- Paul reminds us in Philippians to "not look out for our own interests." But instead we should "take an interest in others." How does it make you feel when other people are selfish and look out for their own interests?
- How can you be humble while playing fun games?



GROW

NATIONAL HOT FUDGE SUNDAE DAY (JULY 25)

CHALLENGE: Share the gospel using a hot fudge sundae.

INGREDIENTS: Hot Fudge, Strawberry Ice Cream, Whipped Cream, Green Sprinkles, Bowls/Spoons

READ & TALK: Talk through each of the ingredients and the verses that go with each one.

- **Hot Fudge:** This represents sin. ALL of us are sinners and sin separates us from God.
Read: Romans 3:23, Romans 6:23
"For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard." (Romans 3:23)
"For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 6:23)
- **Strawberry Ice Cream:** This signifies the blood of Jesus, which He shed on the cross to pay the debt for our sin.
"But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners." (Romans 5:8)
- **Whipped Cream:** A reminder that Jesus' sacrifice cleansed us of our sins.
"Now repent of your sins and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped away." (Acts 3:19)
"Though your sins were like scarlet, they will be white as snow." (Isaiah 1:18)
- **Green Sprinkles:** Green stands for a life of growing in our knowledge and trust of Jesus.
"Rather, you must grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 3:18)

Now have your children build a sundae sharing the gospel with you as they go.

Added bonus... invite over neighbor friends or your community group and let your kids share the gospel as they make their friends ice cream sundaes.

ADDITIONAL CHALLENGES

Additional Rest Activities

#1 | Unstructured Time

Make sure you have at least one week this summer with no scheduled activities for your kids – no VBS, no camps, etc. Enjoy a slower pace at home – sleep a little later, let the kids play, get down on the floor and play with them, take naps, be spontaneous with friends. Take the time to enjoy the lack of schedule and routine.

#2 | Restoring Our Souls

*The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures.
He leads me beside still waters.
He restores my soul. Psalm 23:1-3a*

As busy parents, it is easy for our souls to get frazzled. In that state, we are not usually a source of rest and peace for our families. This summer make time with your Shepherd a high priority. Get alone with Him. Allow Him to lead you to a quiet place and restore your soul. What are the elements that refresh you spiritually – quiet, nature, music, extended time in prayer or the Word? Be sure to incorporate those things that the Lord most uses to speak rest to your soul. Whether this is something you already do regularly or have never done at all, figure out what the next step is for you and make it happen. The rest that results for both you and your family will be worth the effort.

#3 | Couples Date Night

Mom and Dad, one of the best things you can do to be rested and make this a Significant Summer is to invest in your marriage. Ecclesiastes 9:9 says, “Enjoy life with the wife whom you love...” Plan at least one date night a month over the summer. Check out this blog post (<http://www.scottkedersha.com/date-night-challenge/>) for some simple but creative date night ideas.

#4 | Technology Fast

Plan a family media fast where technology is off limits for everyone in the family (including parents) for a specified time. This could be for an evening once a week, a weekend, or during vacation. Be intentional to build face-to-face relationships during the time you gain.

#5 | Family Reading Time

Rest as you read a chapter book aloud as a family. There are tons of options available at your local library. The books “Honey for a Child’s Heart” by Gladys Hunt and “The Read-Aloud Handbook” by Jim Trelease both have extensive lists of age appropriate read aloud materials and can be found at any library. Read together at night before bedtime or even in the afternoon when it is too hot to play outside.

Additional Serve Activities

#1 | Family Serve

Every summer, Watermark’s External Focus ministry creates some amazing resources that families can use to serve together alongside our ministry partners here in the Metroplex. Head to watermark.org/go and find one or more service opportunities that your family can participate in this summer.

#2 | Hands and Feet Service Projects

Hands and Feet Service Projects organize volunteer projects for children and their families throughout the summer, hoping that through these projects we will help cultivate a heart of Christ-centered service in our children. Join their group on Facebook (Search: “Hands and Feet Service Projects”) for access to a list of service opportunities ideal for your family.

#3 | Serve Your Neighbors

Come up with a fun way to serve your neighbors. Choose from the ideas listed below or have a family brainstorming session to generate ideas.

- Pick up trash around the neighborhood or a nearby park or school.
- Welcome a new neighbor with a simple gift and handmade card.
- Host a free lemonade and cookie stand or bake and take cookies to neighbors just for fun.
- Invite a neighborhood family over for dinner.
- Help a neighbor with mowing, raking, or gardening tasks.

#4 | Serve Your Family

“Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor.” - Romans 12:10

Using Romans 12:10 as a basis, challenge your family to “outdo” each other in service to one another.

- Have each person write down a few ways someone else can serve them. Put them all in a jar and have family members draw out a “service project” to do each week.
- Designate a “Secret Service” week where family members try to serve each other without being found out.
- Pick a day to celebrate each person in your family. On that day everybody else does everything they can to encourage and serve that person.

#5 | Serve Your World

A great way to cultivate your kids’ hearts to serve others is to teach them to pray for people around the world. Go to thrivingfamily.com and search for “Around the World in 60 Days” to download a free prayer guide with other fun resources for your family. For each day they have included a Bible lesson and activity that gives your family a glimpse into another culture. Do them all and your family will have prayed around the world.

Another great resource is kidsofcourage.com. Check it out for information and ideas on how to involve your kids in praying for the persecuted church around the world.

Additional Grow Activities:

#1 – Memorize Scripture

Hide Scripture in both your heart and your child's heart by memorizing some verses. Here are some options:

- Memorize the four Significant Summer verses.
- Choose a longer passage and memorize it together as a family throughout the summer (some suggestions might include Ephesians 2:1-10; 1 Corinthians 13 or a section of the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5-7).
- Review them during dinner time with a treat or small prize as an incentive.

#2 – Watermark Kids Blog

Don't forget the Watermark Kids blog ... Our blog for parents of elementary kids is www.watermark.org/blog/elementary/ and for parents of preschoolers, it's www.watermark.org/blog/preschool

Each week we list great activities and questions to use as a follow up to what your child learned in class on Sunday. Challenge your family to complete one activity each week this summer.

#3 – Backyard Bible Club

Invite the neighborhood kids over for some fun and share the gospel, too by hosting a backyard bible club. This is a great way to share God's love with others through stories, games and fun. Check out www.watermark.org/blog/ss2017 for a week's worth of lessons, activities and crafts you can use to put on your own backyard bible club this summer.

#4 – Family Night

Plan a family night this week. During this time be intentional to teach your child(ren) about God and faith while having fun together as a family. A great resource of fun and meaningful activities can be found at <http://www.itstartsat home.org/familynight/>.

#5 – Bible Reading Plan

Commit to reading the Join The Journey passages for June and July together as a family. Whether you've been tracking along all year or just starting, this year's Journey reading plan is perfect for adults and kids and very accessible. Use the discussion questions on the Journey entry for that day to guide conversation with your kids around the Psalms. Check out jointhejourney.com for more.



Additional Play Activities:

#1 – Community Group Play

Take a few hours and spend some time just playing with your community group-kids and all. Invade someone's backyard with a water balloon fight or some good old fashioned field day games like the three-legged race or a sack race. Head to the park and play a game of volleyball or Ultimate Frisbee. Add some competition to it and challenge another community group. Get as creative as you want to be.

#2 – Kid Dates

Parents, spend some individual time with each one of your children. At the beginning of the summer, have each child provide answers to the following:

1. Three favorite places to go out to eat
2. Three favorite things to do outside
3. Three places to get a sweet treat

Write the answers on slips of paper and throw them into a bowl. Choose a time, pick something from the bowl, and do the activity.

#3 – Family Day Trip

Take a day and enjoy a family outing. Here are just a few of the many great things to do just staying in the Metroplex:

- **Burger's Lake** – go back in time to this 1950s style spring-fed lake – www.burgerslake.com
- **Arbor Hills Nature Preserve** – enjoy this 200-acre outdoor park where you can hike, bike, and just enjoy nature - <http://www.plano.gov/facilities/facility/details/Arbor-Hills-Nature-Preserve-20>
- **Drive in movies** – instead of watching a movie at home, take to the road and enjoy a movie at one of the local outdoor theaters in Fort Worth, Lewisville, or Ennis. See www.coyotedrive-in.com or www.galaxydriveintheatre.com.
- **Trinity Railway Express to Fort Worth** – instead of driving to Fort Worth, make the trip there part of the fun by using the TRE, www.trinityrailwayexpress.org.

#4 – Neighborhood Play

- Gather the neighborhood kids together by organizing a group event. Some ideas are:
- Red Rover in the front yard with watermelon or popsicles as a treat afterward
- Fourth of July parade
- Block party
- Kickball or whiffleball tournament

#5 – Family Movie Night

Plan a family movie night. Parents choose a favorite movie from your childhood. Be creative with the snack. Make it match the movie, for example watch E.T and eat Reese's Pieces. Next time let the kids choose the movie and create a matching snack.

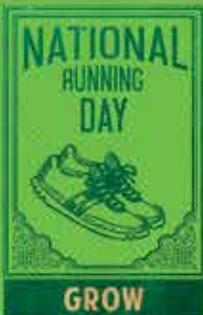
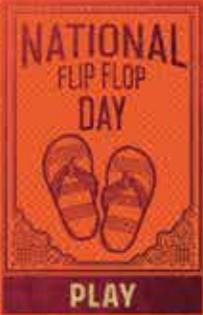
For great family movie night ideas with discussion questions and activities go to pluggedin.com and click on "Movie Nights."

WATERMARK KIDS

SIGNIFICANT SUMMER

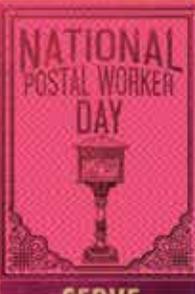
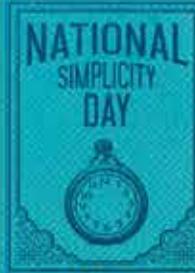
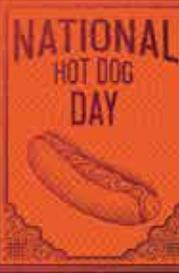
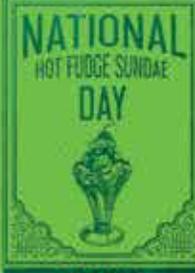
TRANSFORMING TRADITIONS

JUNE

SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
NATIONAL EGG DAY	4	5	NATIONAL DRIVE-IN MOVIE DAY	 <p>NATIONAL RUNNING DAY</p> <p>GROW</p>	8	9
10	NATIONAL CORN ON THE COB DAY	12	NATIONAL WEED YOUR GARDEN DAY	14	15	 <p>NATIONAL FLIP FLOP DAY</p> <p>PLAY</p>
NATIONAL EAT YOUR VEGETABLES DAY	NATIONAL TURKEY LOVER'S DAY	19	20	 <p>NATIONAL SELFIE DAY</p> <p>REST</p>	NATIONAL ONION RING DAY	23
NATIONAL PRALINES DAY	25	26	NATIONAL SUNGLASSES DAY	28	 <p>NATIONAL HANDSHAKE DAY</p> <p>SERVE</p>	30

FOR FULL DESCRIPTION OF CHALLENGES, VISIT WATERMARK.ORG/SIGNIFICANTSUMMER

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JULY

SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
 NATIONAL POSTAL WORKER DAY SERVE	2	3 NATIONAL EAT YOUR BEANS DAY	4	5	6 NATIONAL FRIED CHICKEN DAY	7
8	9 NATIONAL SUGAR COOKIE DAY	10	11 NATIONAL BLUEBERRY MUFFIN DAY	 NATIONAL SIMPLICITY DAY REST	13	14 NATIONAL MAC AND CHEESE DAY
15 NATIONAL GIVE SOMETHING AWAY DAY	16	17	18 NATIONAL SOUR CANDY DAY	 NATIONAL HOT DOG DAY PLAY	20	21
22	23	24 NATIONAL DRIVE-THRU DAY	 NATIONAL HOT FUDGE SUNDAE DAY GROW	26	27 NATIONAL CHILI DOG DAY	28

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