

Summer Programs

Gulfport Youngsters Will Have 'Something To Do'

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GULFPORT — Ask most mothers what they dislike about summer and they'll say it's thinking up an answer to the question, "Mommy, what can I do?"

The first few utterings of the aforementioned question begin a few days after the close of school.

It seems, mothers say, that's all it takes for the novelty of sleeping late to wear off and freedom from some kind of schedule begins to be a cage of its own.

It ain't necessarily necessary.

Young Gulfport citizens will be able to escape the clutches of summer boredom, courtesy of the Parks and Recreation Department.

"It's the biggest summer program ever for us," said Bill Holzaepfel, Parks and Recreation director. "Actually it will be two programs."

A morning program of playground activities will be conducted at Gulfport Elementary school, said Holzaepfel. The city has leased the play area from the School Board in an effort to offer a centralized area for team activities and supervised play.

The second program, Holzaepfel said, will consist of at least 18 different class-type activities, most of which will be held in the Community Center during the afternoon and evening.

Complete schedules for the summer children's program may be obtained at the city hall or the center but some of the offerings include an art class, baton, cake decorating, cheerleading, creative dramatics, dance, golf

and gymnastics.

Archery and softball for both boys and girls will be offered at Hoyt Field. Tennis will be taught at Chase Park.

Most of the activities are free, Holzaepfel said, except for tennis, which will cost participants \$1 for each 90-minute session and teen sewing for children from 13-18 years old will cost \$4 for the 12-week session.

Judo and karate, which are year-round classes at Gulfport, also have been incorporated into the summer program. Judo is available to students for \$6 per month and karate for \$10 per month.

All of the summer programs except the teen sewing and a boating and canoeing class taught by the Red Cross, which is from June 9-13 only, will last for two months.

Registration for the programs will be held June 9-14 at the Community Center. All programs except the boating course will begin June 16.

"We won't refuse a child simply because he hasn't preregistered," Holzaepfel said. "We won't turn away children who don't live in Gulfport unless we are overcrowded. Since there won't be a (countywide) Summer Enrichment program, we expect a big group."

More professionals will be working with the program staff this year according to Holzaepfel.

"For example we have Judy Bataille teaching art, creative dramatics and dance. Judy was formerly with the St. Petersburg Little Theatre," he said.

"We intend to try to motivate the children and offer a lot of things to see just what the kids want and what they can do," said Holzaepfel.