Midterm Study Tips

- **Take a Walk**: Walking has been shown to boost memory, critical thinking skills and creativity.
- **Get some sleep**: Sleeping develops new connections between neurons, likely formed when memories from the day are replayed during sleep.
- **And/or drink coffee**: If you can't reap the cognitive benefits of getting some extra sleep during midterms, caffeine is the next best thing.
- **Join a study group**: Some people prefer studying alone and other frequently use study group. But even if you tend to study by yourself, there are some likely benefits to working in study groups.
- **Test yourself**: Simply having someone give you a practice test or giving yourself one will improve information retention, preparing you for the real test.

Spring Break 2015

The very words "Spring Break" conjure up drunken beach parties and wet T-shirt contests. But each year, tens of thousands of college students opt instead for an alternative spring break. They volunteer their time in farflung locales or further their education with field work, through college programs, churches or agencies such as Habitat for Humanity.

It's a feel-good, philanthropic option that's considerably healthier than the Cancun bacchanals featured on MTV, and one that's becoming increasingly popular. Some 72,000 students participated in these programs in 2010 alone, according to Break Away, an organization that helps colleges and other organizations start their own alternative spring break programs. If your child is interested in an alternative spring break, have him check with his college to see what programs they already have in place. Or, check below for a variety of other options:

- **United Way's Alternative Spring Break**: This international, fundraising organization offers reconstruction and philanthropic projects in Michigan, Indiana and along the Louisiana and Mississippi Gulf Coast. The program costs $250. Volunteers are responsible for their own transportation.

- **Habitat for Humanity's Collegiate Challenge**: Famous for its home-building activities, Habitat's collegiate program offers week-long programs across the United States. During the week, Habitat is building homes in cities including Birmingham, Alabama; Fort Smith, Arkansas; Washington, D.C.; Punta Gorda, Florida; and Des Moines, Iowa. Programs are available other weeks as well. These home-building stints are open to volunteer groups (minimum age 16, cost $150-$500 each, including accommodations and meals).

- **Earthwatch**: Volunteer for a travel-based ecological conservation project or archaeological dig through an organization such as Earthwatch, which offers educational field work at sites around the world.