

GSPK

Happy Gram

Hello again GSPK Families! The SECOND ISSUE of the GSPK Happy Gram is HOT off the virtual presses!

We have made it through another week away from our familiar routines. Nature has provided us with a beautiful distraction this week. It has been an inspiration to unplug from our worries, and for just a moment to enjoy the present and the blessings we have been given. As a school, all of you are our greatest blessing. Not once do we see the wonders of nature without thinking of sharing it with you and your children. Our students remind us how to recapture our childlike wonder of the world and cherish a child's natural ability to live in the present, where yesterday was all the good things we remember, tomorrow is far, far away, and today is what truly matters.

Thank you for continuing to be our greatest blessing.

XOXO,

The GSPK Teachers and Staff





How Are You? You are Doing a Great Job!

Just a reminder to give yourself a pat on the back. You are amazing and we are still so proud of you! This is a time unlike any other, and I bet you have found out this week that you are capable of things you never thought possible. We certainly have! We hope the teacher communications have been helpful in reconnecting your children to the classroom. Expect to see more in the future, and feel free to use them as an enrichment to your weekly schedule. Since our expectation as teachers is to see your children healthy, happy and PLAYING, we have all worked to build connections that are age-appropriate, and hopefully not overwhelming.

Still, if your children are missing seeing their friend's faces, we encourage you to reach out to other parents and form a virtual playgroup. There are a number of apps that we are using currently as teachers, and some that your older children may be using in their remote learning. With adult supervision, these little meetings can be short, sweet little ways to keep connected with friends.

Again: Take care of yourselves, and remember what Mrs. Ingold always says, "We did the best we could do today."

The best apps we have used so far:

Google Hangouts

<https://hangouts.google.com/>

Zoom

<https://zoom.us/>

WhatsApp

<https://www.whatsapp.com/>

Plus our old favorites:

Apple Facetime and Facebook Messenger





Activities and Suggestions for Learning at Home

★ How Will We Play Today?

It's been a week since our last play suggestions, and maybe your little ones are running out of inspirations. Here are a few creative play prompts and props we use in school that can get those imaginations going and provide hours of play.

- Veterinarian: stuffed animals, box or table for exam room, band-aids, toilet paper bandages, empty bottles for “medicine”, droppers, old necklace with pendant as “stethoscope”, paper and pencil for writing, calculator or old keyboard for computer or cash register
- Flower Shop: real, silk or paper flowers (making paper flowers can be a fun part of the activity!), vases or cups, paper to make pretend money or real coins, calculator or old keyboard for cash register
- Grocery Store: real or play fruits and vegetables, boxed and canned goods, newspapers, magazines, anything to sell, grocery bags, calculator or keyboard for cash register, paper and pencil, real or pretend money

More ideas:

<https://www.learning4kids.net/list-of-imaginative-play-ideas/>

<https://www.notimeforflashcards.com/2012/03/25-easy-pretend-play-ideas.html>

<https://kidsactivitiesblog.com/60866/75-fun-pretend-play-ideas/>

★ Journaling for All Ages

You've been reading to your child, now is a good time to record or to help your child record his or her own stories. All you need is paper as well as writing, drawing and painting tools. Younger children can draw or paint their story, and a parent can record, “What is happening in your story?” Older children can be assisted in writing the words themselves. Put the stories together and you will have a special book with your child as author AND illustrator. Want to share it with family? Here are a few sites that can turn your child's pages into a keepsake all family members would be thrilled to receive.

<https://www.techradar.com/news/best-photo-books>



★ Minute to Win It Indoor Play

So you've played all your board games and are ready for new challenges? In the classroom, our kids love competing in Minute to Win It games. If you haven't seen the show, contestants are given a minute to complete a set of random challenges that test skill, concentration and coordination, as well as being just a little silly! It can be as simple as block or cup stacking, picking up cheerios with a straw, rounding up ping-pong balls or any test of skill you can imagine. Even better, let the kids make up their own challenges, and have the whole family play along.

More ideas to get you started:

<https://teachmama.com/minute-win-games-kids-family/>

<https://www.scarymommy.com/minute-to-win-it-games-for-kids/>

★ Baking Time!

In an article from the website Mommy University they state, *cooking with your kids boosts their development* and they list these ten benefits.

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|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| -Increases Language Development | -Increases Focus and Attention |
| -Enhances Fine Motor Skills | -Teaches Life Skills |
| -Increases Math Ability | -Promotes Healthy Eating |
| -Improves Reading Skills | -Boosts Self-Confidence |
| -Introduces Scientific Concepts | -Encourages Family Bonding |

To help get you started, here are some sites with kid-friendly recipes, but don't forget to take the opportunity to teach young bakers traditional recipes passed down from family members. Or start a new tradition!

<https://mommyuniversitynj.com/2015/03/16/10-benefits-of-cooking-with-kids/>

<https://www.delish.com/cooking/g499/kids-cooking-recipes/>

<https://tasty.co/article/melissaharrison/cooking-with-kids>

★ Obstacle Courses for Outdoor Play

Combine exercise, construction and scavenging skills to create an obstacle course for outdoor play. Anything your child can hop over, crawl under, run around or toss can be a part of an obstacle course! Moving and changing the course adds to the workout, so switch it up! Have fun playing in the sun, and feel free to send us pictures of your adventures.

May the sun fill your days with warmth until we play again. XOXO

