



GSPK

Happy Gram

Warmest wishes, dear families and friends! Welcome to GSPK Happy Gram #3 – The Travel Issue

Easter weekend is fast approaching. Like any holiday, it has us thinking back to the things that make this holiday most special. We think of food, family, egg hunts, church gatherings and the miles we would travel to make memories with the people we love. This year we are forced to rethink our traditions and embrace a new way of celebrating, holding tight to the message of resilience and hope that Easter instills in us all. With this issue of the GSPK Happy Gram, we hope to help you find some ways your family can recreate the experience of travel while still staying safely at home. We hope to inspire you to think of new ways to celebrate old traditions while creating new, lasting, meaningful moments

Thank you for the purpose and meaning you bring to our lives.

XOXO,

The GSPK Teachers and Staff





How Are You? You are Doing a Great Job!

Take a breath. This isn't easy and it's OK to say so. You are enough.

Juggling all the responsibilities of being a parent was challenging enough before our lives were disrupted. Now you may find that you are wearing so many more hats, responsible for so many more things. This article from PBS Kids (<https://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/parenting-during-coronavirus-you-are-enough>) addresses the high expectations parents have for themselves at this time and reminds us all that “You are enough.”

“The expectation for being ‘perfect’ during quarantine can add up.” It’s OK to let some things slide. You do not have to schedule engaging activities for every moment of every day. You are enough.

“You are also allowed to go easy on the rules” It’s OK if toys are taking over the house. It’s OK if you don’t stick to your schedule. Maybe it’s time to re-think the schedule and make some changes to fit what works for you now. It’s OK to have an all-day snuggle if it’s what you all need. You are enough.

“And – you’re allowed to feel a little stir-crazy right now.” Being squeezed between the demands of work and the demands of parenting with no chance to truly be alone can take its toll. “Even great parents get burned out, and it’s okay to acknowledge the hard moments.”

The closing paragraph of the article sums up perfectly where our minds and hearts should be in this time. “I’ve never parented through a pandemic before, but I do know that when everything is crazy on the outside, children need love on the inside. The truth is that your child will probably remember little, if anything, about COVID-19 and this extra time at home. But the moments you carve out during the day to connect and cuddle are just what they need right now. The everyday stories, songs and routines you share are exactly the right stuff to help them feel safe, secure and loved. So, drop that load of expectations and take a deep breath. From one friend to another: You are enough.”

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





Activities and Suggestions for Travel at Home

★ Imagination Can Take You Anywhere!

With enough props and imagination, you can travel anywhere in the world. Or make up a new place that doesn't exist! A couch can become an airplane, a few chairs can be a car, a bus, a boat or a train. A keyboard and a cardboard box can be a space ship. A couple of scarves can become magical wings! It doesn't matter how or where you travel, with a big imagination a day at home can turn into a vacation.

- The BIG City: Will it be Paris? London? New York City? Or D.C.? A little research on the local skyline and landmarks can provide the inspiration to draw, paint or construct a city that never sleeps. Pillow forts become skyscrapers. Tinker Toys become the Eiffel Tower. What will you do there? Shop? Visit a museum? See the sights? Visit landmarks? Pack your backpack, bring a water bottle, have your passport and credit card ready, and don't forget to take lots of pictures.
- The Zoo: Time to get out all the stuffed animals and build some enclosures. Will you be the tourist, the zookeeper, or the animal? What will the animals eat? You can even make signs to tell visitors all the animal facts you know and **DON'T FEED THE ANIMALS!**
- Amusement Park: Get out your Christmas lights and line up some chairs for the best roller coaster ever! Popcorn for everyone and beanbag toss for prizes. A spray bottle and a laundry basket can make an amazing log ride. **SPLASH!** Have fun making up new games and rides.
- Unicorn Land: With enough imagination you can go anywhere! Rainbows? Check. Glitter? Check. Big puffy clouds? Of course! Magic wands and cupcakes with sprinkles are all possibilities of things you may find. Prance to your heart's content and have a magical day.
- Alien Planet: Design your planetary landscape and dress up as space aliens as you explore the outer reaches of our galaxy. Chairs and computer keyboards become spaceships or rovers. Blankets and pillows become alien landscapes. Collect a few space rocks and make up an alien language. To infinity and beyond!

<https://www.notimeforflashcards.com/2009/09/pretend-play-get-traveling.html>



★ Explore Space in Your Backyard

The International Space Station comes to the night skies of North Carolina this week! Don't miss the chance to wave at the astronauts and get to know the planets and constellations of our spring night sky. For exact time, location and coordinates, go to Spot the Station online:

<https://spotthestation.nasa.gov/>

You can sign up for alerts for future sightings and share the event with friends. To get an even closer look, rich with photos, videos and mission highlights, go to NASA's Space Station page:

https://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/station/main/index.html

And especially for the young space experts and explorers in your household, there is the NASA Kid's Club, full of games, STEM activities and information:

<https://www.nasa.gov/kidsclub/index.html>

Want to learn more about the constellations? Make a Star Finder with NASA's Space Place:

<https://spaceplace.nasa.gov/starfinder/en/>

★ Let's Go Camping!

Since you are already outside looking at the stars, why not bring out the tent, sleeping bags, flashlights and camp stove for a camping vacation right in your backyard? Many of you have already tried it. The memories made by the campfire, roasting marshmallows, telling stories and singing songs will far outlast the memories of a sleepless night, bug invasions and chilly night temps. It's OK if you change your mind in the middle of the night and decide to crawl back into your soft comfy beds. The experience is just as meaningful and the memories just as sweet.

★ I'm Going to Disney World!

For the thrill seekers out there, did you know that you can take a virtual ride on many of your favorite Disney World rides? At the Virtual Disney World YouTube Channel, you can take a 360 degree tour of the park, jump on your favorite rides and experience the thrill, the magic, the sights and sounds of Disney without leaving the comforts and safety of home.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYyJUEtYv-ZW7BgjhP3UbTg>

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

