

Letter to Parents



A Note for Families

Dear Parents,

As schools remain closed, we continue to work towards our efforts in ensuring our students and families are supported during this difficult time. We are dedicated in helping children cope with this situation by providing resources and ideas on ways in which both children and parents can work together. These activities can be put in place to ensure that students stay active and engaged towards their developmental journey. Outlined on this newsletter are possible activities and educational games your children can work on at home with support. All the staff at St. Gabriel Child Care Centre look forward to seeing you all and wish everyone to stay safe and healthy.

A Message from Our Staff

Our staff at St. Gabriel Child Care Centre will continue to post ideas for activities on our Facebook page, Instagram account and Hi Mamma for our toddler and preschool families. We encourage you to share what your children are working on at home to keep busy! Emails will also continue to be sent out with any updates regarding current events. If for any reason you are not receiving emails, please contact info@stgabrielchildcare.com.

Having A Conversation

For everyone, this may be a time of worry and feeling overwhelmed but it is important to remember that your child may be feeling the same way. Whether on TV or online, your child may be hearing a lot about what is currently going on around them and may be asking questions. As adults, it is our role and responsibility to have those meaningful conversations to help them make sense of what they are hearing.

1. Let them know that you are available to talk and listen when they are ready; remain comforting
2. Find out what they already know; consider what they may have seen or heard on TV or online
3. Be honest and have the right information to share; consider your child's age and their level of understanding
4. Review different ways they can reduce the spread of germs

Here are some useful tips to consider when wanting to talk to your child:

<https://keltymentalhealth.ca/blog>

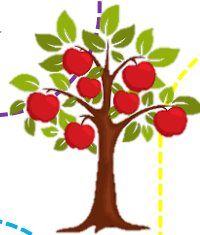
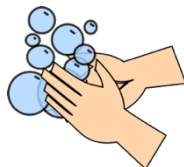
Practicing Proper Handwashing

Handwashing is always important to practice, especially during this time. Proper handwashing is one of the best ways to stop the spread of germs, both at home and at school. When practicing handwashing, one way to ensure children are following the proper steps can be by incorporating handwashing songs. This can allow children to develop their language and a way to know the required time taken for washing hands. Ask children what everyday songs from school they remember or what their favorite is, maybe it is "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star", "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" or simply singing "Happy Birthday".

Here are fun videos to watch for handwashing:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NoxdS4eXy18>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LQ24EfM7sEw>



A newsletter full of ideas for at home activities

Below are some activities and resources that you can follow. Ask your child what they enjoyed most about school. What was their favorite thing to do or to make? Encourage at home activities to be child-led, while promoting a sense of belonging, well-being, engagement and expression. Be creative with these ideas and most importantly, have fun!



Cognition

There are many games and activities that you can do at home with your child that can improve their development and understanding in this area. From board games to puzzles, apps to handmade math games, you can encourage your child to get involved and take initiative over their own learning. Below are some ideas that can help you get started on incorporating math in your everyday routine with your child.

- Making flash cards of addition or subtraction number sentences
- Creating matching games for number matching and shape matching
- Connect four to help children learn about problem solving techniques, while looking for patterns and planning ahead
- Monopoly to learn about numbers; counting and handling money amounts
- Card games, such as go fish or crazy eights, can help with number recognition, as well as to learn about higher and lower numbers (flip cards and determine the greatest and least number)
- Use an analog clock (you can make one if you do not have one at home) to practice telling time, counting minutes and seconds

Brain Puzzle Apps

Flow free
Block! Hexa Puzzle

Instagram

@apinchofkinder

Here is are websites that provide interactive questions, according to the grade, for children to answer:

<https://ca.ixl.com/math/>

<https://www.abcya.com/games/blobble>



Language App
Sight Words &
Phonics Reading

Instagram

@earlycorelearning
@apinchofkinder

Communication, Language & Literacy

- Gathering rocks from your backyard or neighborhood that can be used as alphabet rocks; you can paint a letter on each rock which can then be used for spelling
- Making flashcards of sight words and phonics
- Using magnetic letters to encourage spelling, sorting and practicing sounding out letters/words. This website provides different ways you can use magnetic letters to improve language and literacy
<https://www.notimeforflashcards.com/2016/08/5-ways-to-use-magnetic-letters-free-printables.html>
- Having a weekly journal to have children write and draw what their favourite part of the week was

Here are a few websites that provides activities, worksheets and printables for all grades:

<https://www.k5learning.com/free-worksheets-for-kids>

<https://funlearningforkids.com/literacy-activities/>

<https://ca.ixl.com/ela/>

<https://www.starfall.com/h/>



Sensory and Creative

- Making slime, goop and playdough can allow for children to explore fine motor skills by squishing and poking, as well as understanding the different textures
- Developing water bins and sand bins with different toys and materials
- Using food colouring and water, dyeing spaghetti and rice is another great sensory activity that can also be used in an imaginative way to create art
- Painting using water colours (tip: sprinkling salt into a wet area you just painted to add texture to the painting), acrylic paint and finger painting on paper to mix colours or to create an image
- Canvas painting following a step-by-step tutorial video
- Dot art, pointillism, landscape art with colouring tools such as markers, pastels and paint

Creative Arts App
Kids Drawing Games 4
Coloring

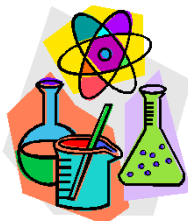
Instagram
@perfectpreschoolplans
@mothercould
@kidscrafts101



Science and STEM

- Science experiments are a fantastic way to encourage creativity in a way that enhances many skills such as planning and goal-setting, all through inquiry
- Making lava lamps, slime, goop and playdough using everyday materials that are safe for children, that you may already have in your home (tip: provide plastic tools to allow for manipulation of materials)
- Designing mazes using straws, q-tips or toothpicks on a paper plate with a marble; have your child hold the plate steadily while lifting, moving and tilting
- Building towers and structures using popsicle sticks, plastic cups or marshmallows and toothpicks

Instagram
@steamkidschallenge



Here is a website for more science and STEM activities:

<https://buggyandbuddy.com/stem-challenges/>

Gross Motor Skills

- Indoor or outdoor hopscotch (if doing indoors, hopscotch can be made using painters' tape)
- Balloon and bubble play
- Construction play with building blocks to improve skills such as stacking, assembling and balancing materials
- Kids yoga
- Just Dance
- Tic Tac Toss using painters' tape and beanbags
- Bicycles and scooters
- Obstacle courses can be a great and fun way to get moving!

Here are some websites with some more creative ways to get children active, along with a link to Cosmic Kids Yoga:

<https://www.themeasuredmom.com/indoor-gross-motor-activities/>

<https://handsonaswegrow.com/get-the-kids-moving-activities/>

<https://www.youtube.com/user/CosmicKidsYoga>

