

Dear families

Welcome to Issue 8 of our Growing and Learning Together flyer and we hope you have all been having lots of fun and learning through the range of ideas that have been on offer in these flyers. With more schools and early years settings opening from the beginning of June, this will be the last in our series of family flyers, other than, we will in July be bringing you an Education for Sustainable Development 'Summer Special'. In this issue we bring you some ideas to explore the wonders of science and will have your children wondering... what? how? and why?

STAY ALERT ▶ CONTROL THE VIRUS ▶ SAVE LIVES

Parachute Performance

This is a great activity for children to start to understand the scientific wonders of gravity and air resistance. All you will need is:

- squares of different materials e.g. handkerchief, plastic bag, paper napkin, small headscarf
- a few small toy people ...or make your own out of paper
- string or thread – four equal lengths for each parachute
- scissors.

As you know, be mindful of children when using plastic bags as they are a suffocation hazard and, of course, sharp scissors can be dangerous too

Your children may need some support with preparing the parachutes. Carefully snip a small hole in each corner of the squares and slip the thread through the hole and tie. Alternatively, to be safer, just tie the thread around the corner of the square but this may slip off so make sure it's securely tied.

Holding the centre of the parachute as high as you can do, gently toss the parachute into the air and watch it 'float' down. Depending on the age of the children involved ask questions and chat about...

- how fast or slow the parachutes fall?
- count the number of seconds for them to fall
- which parachute falls the fastest?
- which parachute falls the slowest?
- can the children work out why?
- what shape is the parachute making whilst falling?
- if outdoors, is there any wind that could be affecting the movement of the parachutes?
- do they want to change anything about their parachute to make it more effective?



Making an Iceberg

Children are fascinated with ice so this simple experiment is ideal for exploring what happens to water when frozen and discovering what happens when ice melts.

You will need:

- a space where you are happy for the potential for spilt water
- a plastic tub – one each would be ideal but you will need to ensure you have space in your freezer
- a range of objects - see if your child can find ones that may float or sink
- jug of cold water – small ones, if possible, for little hands to master
- food colouring (optional)
- deep baking tray, or similar container, to stand your icebergs in whilst you explore with them
- sponge
- salt
- warm water
- knife, fork and spoon (children's cutlery)

What to do:

- pour water into the plastic tub
- add food colouring if you wish
- count the objects into the water
- talk about the objects - e.g. will they sink or float? Would you normally find these objects in water?
- place the tub with its contents into the freezer – take regular looks to see what is happening to the water as it gets colder and starts to freeze
- leave overnight in the freezer
- turn the tub upside down to release the ice block into the baking tray
- explore and chat about what happens if you put a small amount of salt onto the ice or squeeze warm water from a sponge onto the ice (you will know this of course but please don't allow children to eat the salt)
- as the ice melts start trying to release the objects using a spoon for younger children and a knife, fork and spoon for older children
- talk through and discuss everything that is happening with the ice block including what it feels like to touch ...your children will be fascinated especially with the way the ice block slips about in the pan and is hard to keep still
- did you manage to rescue all the objects? Count them again just to make sure one hasn't slipped away?



Magical slime

This is a fascinating opportunity as this easy-to-make homemade slime provides lots of entertainment and discussion as the slime moves through fingers one minute and then can appear almost solid the next. It will be useful to wear aprons or an old t-shirt as this activity can get quite messy ...but is easy to clear up.

Depending on the number of you, you may need to double up the recipe to ensure everyone has a good amount to explore.

What you will need:

- 1 cup cornflour
- 1 cup of washing-up liquid
- 1 cup of warm water
- food colouring (optional)
- mixing bowl and spoon
- tray or similar

1. Let your children have fun measuring out the cornflour into the bowl – of course, assist if needed
2. Add the washing-up liquid and mix together with the spoon
3. If you want to, add food colouring at this point but this is not essential if you don't have any to hand
4. Slowly add a little bit of warm water at a time and mix until the contents of the bowl become smooth and runny but remain thick

With a tray placed beneath exploring hands, pick up a lump of the mixture and see and feel what happens when you just hold the mixture in open hands and it flows through your fingers. Then squeeze the mixture into a ball and watch and feel it become hard and solid. Try stretching it out and see what happens.

Great opportunity to get little minds thinking by asking questions? Is it cold or warm? Does it smell? Do you like the smell? Does it make any noise as you move it around the bowl, tray and hands? Is it a liquid or a solid?

You may need to look at other liquids and solids to help young children understand the difference.

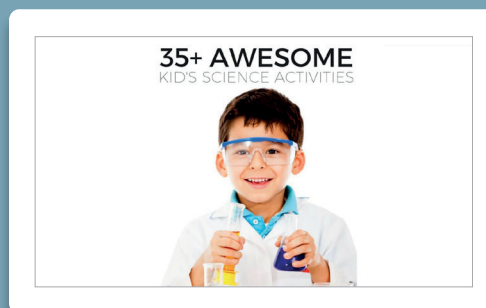


Creating Special Moments

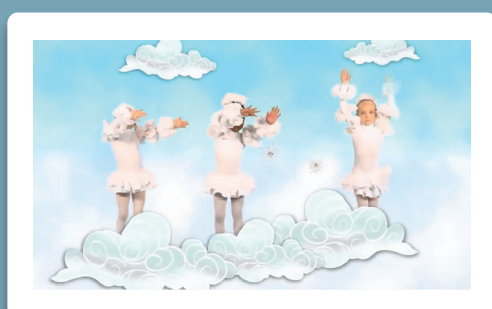
More opportunities to explore science and be amazed...



Songs and nursery rhymes for young children promoting early science learning



For older children



Children learn through play and they learn most from you so make your time together as playful as possible. They will love playing with you and many special memories can be created. Try to create a daily routine for you and your children - include making regular contact with other family members via social media so that children still feel connected to them.

Useful information to help explain Coronavirus to your children

Coronavirus explained through a cartoon by the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

UNICEF guides to coronavirus for parents and children

If your child is worried or anxious about coronavirus, find professional advice from Parents Helpline experts at Young Minds

This information has been provided by The Education People, Kent County Council's education services company

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Early Years and Childcare Excellence



Enhancing Family Involvement in Children's Learning

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