



Stark County Board of DD Early Intervention Newsletter

February 2022

Virtual Playgroup

Have a heart; join us for heart activities all month long on Tuesdays @ 10AM...



February 1st
Kid's in the Kitchen
Heart Healthy Snack

It's time to be creative again in the kitchen and make a heart healthy snack to enjoy together. These cute little heart sandwiches make a great snack or lunch and taste delicious too!

February 8th
Expressive Art
Up-Cycled Hearts



Today's creation will be made out of recycled materials. Look around your house to see what you have that can be recycled into a beautiful piece of art. You might have scraps of colored paper, ribbon, yarn, buttons, an empty cereal box, foil, cardboard tubes, etc. Meet us virtually at 10 am to use your recycling to make a beautiful creation. We can't wait to see your upcycled hearts when you are done creating them!

February 15th
Sensory Play
Squishy Conversation Hearts



Connect with us for a mess free activity to explore sensory play and science all at once. See what happens when you leave conversation hearts in a bag of hair gel – you may be surprised at the result! After making our sensory bags we will give it a few minutes for the science to begin. While we are waiting we can sort the rest of your conversation hearts by color.



February 22nd
Movement Games
Heart Healthy Actions



Join us to get heart healthy and move today. Did you know the heart is a muscle? Keep it healthy by moving! Can you move your heart around by following our lead? Everyone will get the chance to lead by showing us a new way to move with our hearts (or any object available). How many ways can we move the heart? You will have to connect with us virtually to see!

Conversation Heart Sorting

Here is a simple way to introduce colors to your child or reinforce color identification by using small colorful objects or candies for sorting. Candies like M & M's, Skittles, or Candy Hearts are great motivators for enticing your child's interest into sorting colors.



Take sorting a step further and compare which color has more or less; count how many hearts of each color.

Stack the hearts, which stack is taller or shorter?

Challenge your child to a competition...who can stack their hearts the highest?

They might win!!

Family Fun Ideas

Conversation Heart Sensory Bags

Valentine's Heart Sandwiches



Make these cute little sandwiches for Valentine's Day (or any day) and enjoy the sweet flavor of strawberry cream cheese. Serve the sandwiches for lunch or as an afternoon

snack. You could purchase strawberry cream cheese already made or make your own.

To make the cream cheese you will need:

- 4 oz. cream cheese
- 5-6 chopped strawberries or any red berry
(Fresh or frozen)
- 1 tsp of brown sugar.

Combine the ingredients by smashing them with a fork until the mixture is fairly smooth and pink. You could substitute strawberry jam or another red jam to make this.

To make the sandwiches you will need:

- Several slices of bread
- A large heart cookie cutter
- A small heart cookie cutter
- Butter knife
- Strawberry cream cheese (you can substitute jelly, etc.)



Using a large heart cookie cutter and 2 slices of bread have your child cut out 2 heart shapes. Cut another heart from the center of one of the bread pieces with a smaller cutter. Spread a layer of the cream cheese on the solid heart and top it with the second piece so some of the pretty, pink cream cheese peeks through and enjoy!

You could also substitute peanut butter and jelly, butter and jelly, etc. for the cream cheese spread. Slice fresh strawberries and add them to the sandwich or as a treat on the side. Sliced strawberries will resemble a heart when sliced down the middle. ENJOY!!



What happens when you put conversation hearts into a bag with liquid? Try this MESS FREE activity and see- you may be surprised at the result! Do you have a bag of conversation hearts or similar candy? Use up those sweet treats for a fun, mess free sensory play activity and conduct a science experiment with your child at the same time.

Supplies

- A gallon size bag
- Tape
- Clear hair gel
- Conversation hearts
- A Sharpie marker



This activity will give your child a chance to practice fine motor skills and build strength in their fingers. Start by drawing a heart on the outside of the bag with a sharpie marker. As your child puts the candy hearts into the bag (you will want about 20, but you can use more or less) talk about what colors they are using.

Next, help your child to squeeze about half a bottle of clear hair gel into the bag. Help them to press the seal closed on the Ziploc bag and if you wish tape the top of the bag shut to assure it is sealed. Squeezing the bottle and zipper shut are also good for building finger strength.

Now invite your child to play with the bag. Encourage them to push and squish the candies through the gel. Maybe you could challenge them to move all the hearts inside or outside of the heart you drew on the bag. As your child is moving the candies in the gel watch and discover what they do. This makes for great "conversation" about what is happening to the "hearts". You could ask, what happened to the writing? And soon after you might ask, what is happening to the hearts? Does your child know what the word dissolve means? This is a great opportunity to build your child's vocabulary and understanding of words. Watch what happens over the next few days...the candy will continue to dissolve or melt and the candy hearts will disappear. As this happens the colors will begin to form a beautiful rainbow of colors to talk about.

UpCycled Heart Art



Encourage your child's creativity creating a beautiful UPCYCLED HEART using recycled materials you already have around the house. Have your child look around the house for materials they would like to use to make their project. Recycled materials such as scraps of yarn, ribbon, material, buttons, magazine pictures, straws, any kind of paper (tissue, construction, cardstock...), bottle caps, etc. these are just a few ideas.

Materials needed:

Paper
Glue
Recycled materials



To make one cut or draw a heart shape out of paper, cardboard, or whatever you have around the house. Give your child a bottle of glue or glue stick and encourage them to cover the heart shape with the materials they have gathered OR let them decide what they want to create with the materials they have gathered. Every heart or creation will be unique. Talk to your child about what materials they used, where they placed them, etc.

Follow the Heart

Try this quick, fun game with your child to get them moving. Following and understanding directions is an important skill. Help your child to practice this skill by playing games that challenge them to not only listen but follow the direction as well. Having an object to touch and manipulate helps your child make sense of the position words they are hearing. Try using these position words to lead your child:



Put the heart...

Above

Below

Beside

Top

Bottom

Behind

Under

Next to

Between

Middle

If your child struggles or puts it in the wrong place smile and show them where you want it emphasizing the word as you demonstrate where to place it.

Be sure to let your child have a turn giving you directions to follow.

Valentine's Adventure Hunt

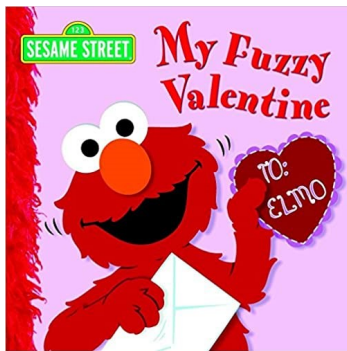
Who doesn't love an adventure? Especially if you are in search of a treasure. Use the Valentine Adventure Hunt activity at the end of the newsletter to have an indoor scavenger Hunt with your children. This activity is a great for so many skills...direction following, language skills & vocabulary to help your child learn and understand descriptive words like tiny, smooth, shiny, red... and also positional words such as beside, above, next to, below....

To play, hide items for your child to find or send them off on an adventure to find an object to match the description. If they are having trouble finding an object help them out by giving them directions using a position word to help them find it.



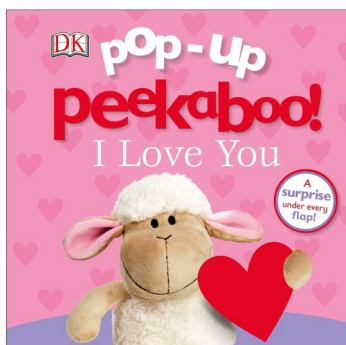
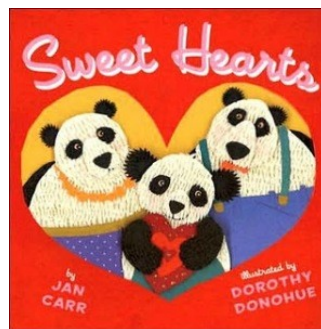
BOOKS TO READ...

A short picture book that creatively uses heart shapes on every page. *My Heart Is Like a Zoo* features bright colors, simple sentences, playful animals, and more than 300 hearts for children to count and enjoy.



Elmo wants to know which of his Sesame Street friends sent him a beautiful Valentine's Day card. Children ages 1 to 4 will love touching the fuzzy valentine on every spread!

One heart on the bathroom mirror, One heart in a shoe, One heart by my mommy's mug, To tell her "I love you!" Follow a little panda as he hides hearts all over his house to surprise his family. He slips one into his mommy's sleeve; he places one near the baby's plate. No one is forgotten--not even Spot the dog!



Find out who's sending Sheep presents in this cute book with flaps to lift and pop-ups to enjoy.

"Children are made readers on the laps of their parents." - Emilie Buchwald.

Like Hearts

Tune: Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star

Red hearts, white hearts,
Pink hearts, too.
I like purple hearts.
How about you?
Green hearts, yellow hearts,
Blue hearts, too.
I like rainbow hearts.
How about you?



Songs and Fingerplays...

"Heart"



I put my hands together,
This is how I start
I curve my fingers right around,
And I can make a heart!

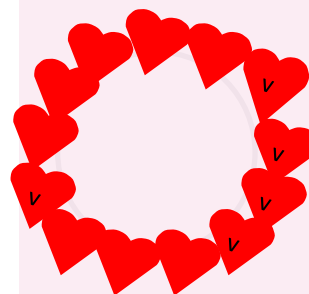
A Red Heart

Sung to: "Mary had a little lamb"

I have a red heart,
a red heart, a red heart.
I have a red heart.
That I will give to you.



Love is a Circle



Love is a circle,
Round and round,
Love goes up,
And love comes down,
Love is on the inside,
Trying to get out,
Love is whirling and twirling about!

Valentine Adventure Hunt!!

☐

Something RED

☐

Something SHINY

☐

Something SMOOTH

☐

Something TINY

☐

A  HEART

☐

Something FUZZY

☐

Something SOFT

☐

Something HARD

☐

Something COLD

☐

Something w/ WHEELS

