

# Supporting Partnerships to Assure Ready Kids

Fall 2021 Family Newsletter

## Way to Go!

It's smart to be a SPARK family. Here's why:

- SPARK makes getting ready for school so much easier – and more fun, too!
- Your parent partner is your family's personal readiness guide who provides resources, information, and support.
- SPARK books, supplies, and activities strengthen readiness skills.
- SPARK children score much higher on the readiness assessment given to all new kindergarteners. This shows they have more fully developed the skills they need for school success.



Here's how you can get the most out of your SPARK experience:

- Make sure you keep all your appointments.
- Use your activity cards and supplies to keep the learning going.
- Read with your child every day.
- Have fun!

## Fall is Learning Time!

Nature gives us so many treasures in fall! It's fun to visit the playground or the park to collect these gifts from nature and learn with them at home.

To go on your treasure collection trip, make sure you dress warmly. Bring a bag or pail with you to store your treasures until you get back home.

These are just some of the treasures you might find:

- Acorns
- Green leaves
- Pine needles
- Twigs
- Yellow leaves
- Pine cones
- Red leaves
- Brown leaves
- Grasses

Once you return home, lay out your treasures and observe. How many different colors of leaves did you find? Did you find more acorns, or more pine cones?

You can use your fall treasures for lots of fun activities:

- Lay a leaf under a sheet of paper and rub with the side of a crayon to make a leaf imprint.
- Draw a tree, then glue leaves, needles, and pine cones onto the branches.
- Use pine needles or grass as a paintbrush to create unique art.
- Brush paint onto a pine cone and stamp scalloped patterns onto paper.
- If you have a hole punch, you can even make leaf confetti!



## Letters to Practice Now

**Hh** (home, holiday, help)

**Tt** (table, Thanksgiving, together)

**Ss** (season, sweet potato, snow)

We are looking for Squeaky the Mouse! Do you see him anywhere on this page? How many acorns do you see?

## What We're Reading Now: Fall Edition

If you're in the three-year-old program, you might be reading *From Head to Toe*.

This book helps strengthen observation skills, along with the ability to take turns and follow directions. Playing the classic game *Simon Says* is another great way to practice those skills while also focusing on the things your child is learning in SPARK. "Simon" might ask the players to:

- Point to something round
- Find something that's green
- Pick up something that has pages
- Circle the letter 'E'
- Write your name

You can play *Simon Says* pretty much anywhere: at home, in the car, or in the grocery store. The game will be different every time! Just don't forget to let everyone have their turn to be "Simon."

### Learn More Online!

- Sing the story along with Miss Nina: [bit.ly/ninasing](http://bit.ly/ninasing)
- Get your body moving with Spaghetti Eddie: [bit.ly/partssong](http://bit.ly/partssong) 
- The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art is too far away for a visit—it's in Massachusetts. Luckily, its *Museum at Home* program offers fun activities and interactive art exhibits that are only a click away: [bit.ly/carlehome](http://bit.ly/carlehome)

If you're in the four-year-old program, you might be reading *Feast for Ten*.

Many families have celebrations during fall and early winter. If your family will be celebrating, this is a great time to talk about what to expect.

You can talk about why you celebrate, who might celebrate along with you, and the special foods you will eat. The grocery store ads that come in the mail are very helpful for this. Together, make a list of the foods you will eat during your celebration. Then, look through the ads for pictures of those foods. Help your child cut out each picture. Glue the pictures onto a paper plate or sheet of paper to create a pretend feast meal. Is anything missing? Draw it in!

Thanksgiving is a natural time to focus on gratitude. Tell your child what you are thankful for. Then, help your child make a list of the things they are grateful for, and ask your child to draw them. The drawings make great dinner table centerpieces or placemats.

### Learn More Online!

- Read and count along with Mrs. Garcia: [bit.ly/garciacount](http://bit.ly/garciacount)
- Sing about thankfulness with the Juicebox Jukebox: [bit.ly/singthanks](http://bit.ly/singthanks)
- Make your celebration festive by creating place cards for the dinner table: [bit.ly/turkcards](http://bit.ly/turkcards)



Oh no! Squeaky ran away! Is he on *this* page? Do you see any patterns on this page?

## Andre: Making the Grade

Andre lives in Summit County. He used to be a SPARK child. Now that he's in the first grade, he has continued on in our SPARK Plus tutoring program. Here's what his mom had to say about her family's experience:



**Miss Kelley is our SPARK parent partner. She has been a wonderful addition to our family.**

She has worked with and continues to work with 3 of my children (ages 4, 5, and 6). She has made such a difference in my children's learning experience.

We began with my son Andre. He is now in the first grade, but began working with Kelley in preschool. Andre usually shows no interest in schoolwork, but when Kelley comes, he is very responsive.

**He has shown so much improvement with writing and math that it's almost mind-blowing! He currently has excellent grades.**

My girls are also showing improvement as well. They retain all the information because Kelley makes it fun to learn and we just absolutely love her!

**I look forward to each visit and would recommend the SPARK program to anyone and everyone who has children.**

*Mrs. Shaqueta Copeland*



## Measuring Together

**Stark County Parent Partner Missy Beebe tells her story of one family's recent shift from virtual to in-person SPARK lessons:**



Love and her mom have been very good about keeping our appointments for virtual SPARK lessons.

We decided it was time for an in-person lesson, because *A Color of his Own* is a fun lesson that uses lots of plastic chameleons.

We used the chameleons to measure our arms, our green leaves, and the round table, and then we moved on to the table in the picture.

It was great to finally see Love in person. She was so excited to visit me at the Early Childhood Resource Center, rather than seeing me on the computer.

We can't wait for some dry weather, so we can go outside to use all the fun new play equipment at the Early Childhood Resource Center.



**The plastic chameleons help SPARK children learn how to predict and measure the lengths of various objects.**

**Where is Squeaky now?**

## Back by Popular Demand: Virtual Family Math Night!

SPARK will again be offering a virtual math night, thanks to the efforts of Sister Joanne Caniglia from the Dominican Sisters of Peace Motherhouse in Akron.

Sister Joanne is a math education professor at Kent State University; she designed virtual lessons and activity materials to help SPARK families have lots of fun while learning math. Her fellow sisters at the Motherhouse helped to create the materials.

Our last math night was a huge success — the families enjoyed it and learned a lot! The next session will focus on lots of different skills, including counting, shapes, patterning, and directions.

### Math Night Schedule

- **Stark County Families: Oct 19 or Nov 16 (choose one date)**
- **Summit County Families: Oct 12 or Nov 9 (choose one date)**

All sessions will run from 6-7 pm.

Space is limited; these online sessions will fill up fast! Tell your parent partner right away if you want to reserve a space.



### Orange, Yellow, Red, and Brown

Sing to the tune of *Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes*

Orange, yellow, red, and brown (*red and brown*),

Orange, yellow, red, and brown (*red and brown*),

**And autumn leaves are twirling all around,**

Orange, yellow, red, and brown (*red and brown*).

Orange, yellow, red, and brown (*red and brown*),

Orange, yellow, red, and brown (*red and brown*),

**And autumn leaves are dancing in the breeze,**

Orange, yellow, red, and brown (*red and brown*).

Orange, yellow, red, and brown (*red and brown*),

Orange, yellow, red, and brown (*red and brown*),

**And autumn leaves are falling to the ground,**

Orange, yellow, red, and brown (*red and brown*).

Watch the video together online! [bit.ly/leafcolors](https://bit.ly/leafcolors)

### Let's be Social!

Follow us for lots of fun activities and highly shareable content:

- **Facebook:**

@SPARKOhio

@SPARKOHStarkSummit

- **Instagram:** SPARKOhio

- **YouTube:** SPARK Ohio

We love to see what our SPARK families are up to, so don't forget to tag us when you post photos!



**It's the end of the newsletter! Did you find Squeaky on every page?  
What else is on this page that's also on the first page?**