

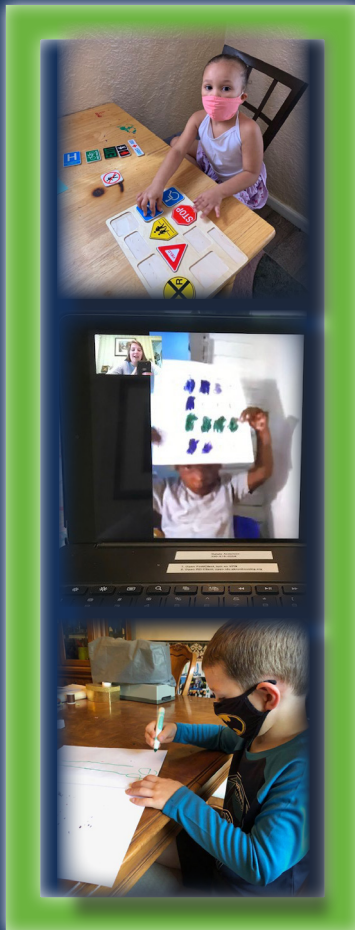
# Supporting Partnerships to Assure Ready Kids

Spring 2021 Family Newsletter

## Keep Being Safe!

We are all tired of dealing with the pandemic, but don't give up just yet—we really are in the home stretch!

Keep wearing masks, washing hands, and socially distancing.



If you choose to get vaccinated, make sure to visit the website [gettheshot.coronavirus.ohio.gov](https://gettheshot.coronavirus.ohio.gov) to check your eligibility and reserve an appointment.

## Spring Has Sprung!

Spring is the time when all kinds of creatures come out and say hello after a long winter. It's also the time when we can visit the great outdoors to say hello to them!

Take a nature walk together: at the park, down the block, or just in your yard. See how many critters you can spot.

### Can you spy:

- Birds?
- Bunnies?
- Worms?
- Butterflies?
- Frogs?
- Squirrels?
- Chipmunks?
- Other creatures?

Make sure you put on your quiet feet and listening ears. That will increase your chances of seeing as many different animals as possible.

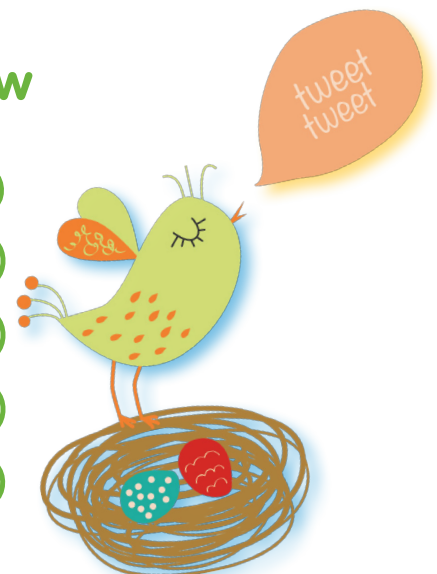
If you bring a small notebook and pencil with you on your walk, you can write down which animals you see. Once you get back home, you can look them up online to learn more about what they eat, where they sleep, and how they spend their days. Search on National Geographic's animal info site: [bit.ly/lookfactng](https://bit.ly/lookfactng)

## Letters to Practice Now

**Bb** (bird, bloom, butterfly)

**Ff** (flowers, fragrant, frog)

**Ll** (ladybug, lake, lamb)



Do you see a ladybug on this page?

## What We're Reading Now

If you're in the three-year-old program, you might be reading *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*.

This is a great book to inspire your child to try new foods. The caterpillar eats so many things, including:

- An apple,
- Pears,
- Plums,
- Strawberries,
- Oranges,
- A pickle,
- Swiss cheese,
- Cherry pie, and
- Watermelon.

If any of these foods are new to your child, have a taste test the next time you read the book together: your child might discover a new favorite!



If you're in the four-year-old program, you might be reading *The Little Red Hen*.

### Cooperation and Teamwork Activities to Try

**Play *Follow the Leader*.** The leader gives simple commands for the players to follow (like *touch your head* or *jump two times*). This strengthens listening and cooperation skills. Be sure to change leaders, so your child gets a low-stakes chance to be in control.

**Make a pizza together.** Homemade pizza is simple if you buy pre-made dough at the supermarket. One person rolls out the dough. Another person spoons on the sauce. Someone else sprinkles on the cheese. Then it just needs to bake! As you eat, talk about how everyone's help was needed to produce a delicious meal.

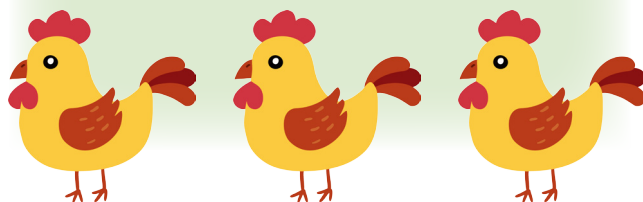
**Sort clean laundry together.** This is a great way to teach your child to pitch in while practicing skills they'll need in kindergarten, like counting and sorting by color. Once all the laundry is sorted, point out how much faster the work went with more than one person — and how much more fun it was to do it together!

### Go online to learn more!

- Watch the book come to life in a gorgeous, colorful film: [bit.ly/catervid](http://bit.ly/catervid)
- This super-fun caterpillar song is danceable: [bit.ly/catertune](http://bit.ly/catertune)
- Here are easy caterpillar craft projects you can do together: [bit.ly/catercraft](http://bit.ly/catercraft)

### Go online to learn more!

- Watch the book being read aloud: [bit.ly/henbook](http://bit.ly/henbook)
- Here's a very catchy *Little Red Hen* song: [bit.ly/hensong](http://bit.ly/hensong)
- Make your very own Little Red Hen: [bit.ly/henplate](http://bit.ly/henplate)



Any ladybugs on this page?



## Making Virtual Learning Work

*It takes teamwork and planning.*

### **Stark County Parent Partner Cala Seifer tells the story of what it took to make virtual SPARK lessons work for one family:**

This year, I'm working virtually with siblings: Qashay is in our four-year-old program, and her younger brother Chazander is in our three-year-old program. Their mom, Johnetta, has been very gracious as we've navigated virtual lessons together.

Our virtual learning journey didn't start smoothly. The school district gave the family iPads and hotspots, but Johnetta wasn't sure how to connect for our lessons. We worked together to help her learn.

During lessons, Qashay and Chazander would move the iPad around or walk away from the camera, so we couldn't interact. Johnetta would get frustrated: she also has a baby to tend to!

I didn't feel much learning was taking place. Reading together (the activity that starts every SPARK lesson) just didn't seem possible.

Johnetta and I decided to make a plan. I gave her an instruction sheet with pictures to follow during lessons. We chose a table

where the iPad could stay in one place during the lesson. We also scheduled our lessons during



the baby's nap time, to keep things manageable. We decided Johnetta would hold the book and point out the illustrations as we read the story together.

I called Johnetta the day before to remind her of the upcoming visit, and texted her a few hours before the lesson.

We kept the lesson short and simple—and all of our planning SPARKed success! I could see the kids the entire time, distractions were minimized, and we easily flowed from activity to activity.

I was so impressed that I called Johnetta that evening to thank and compliment her. We're now on our way to doing lots of virtual learning activities together.

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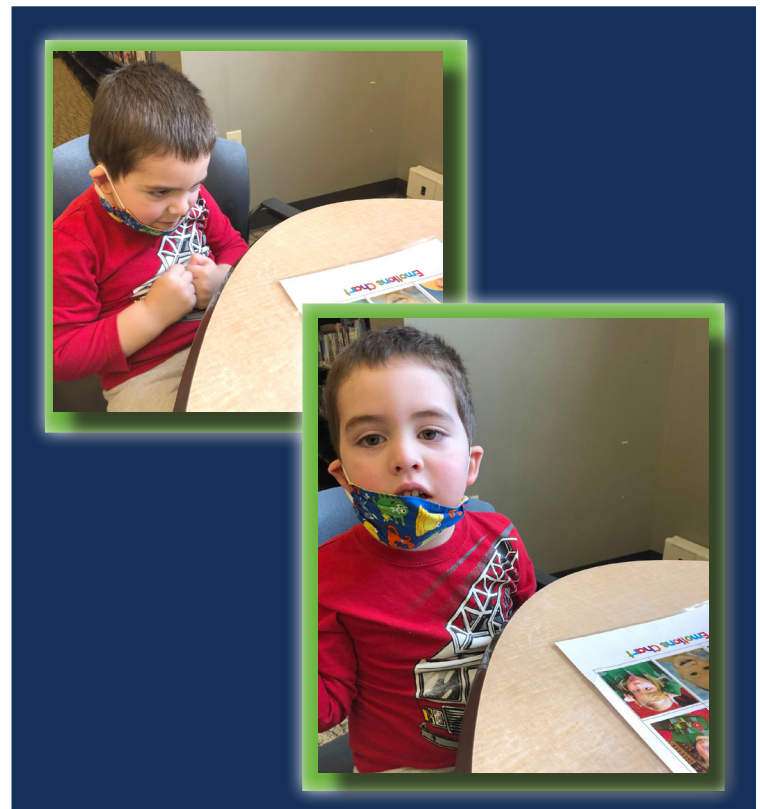
## Henry: Excited to Learn

### **La Kecia Neal is a Summit County parent partner. She has been working with Henry, who has made great progress:**

When he first started with SPARK, Henry expressed enthusiasm for learning. He loved showing me that he could spell and sound out letters in his name, boldly and proud.

However, writing didn't come so easily. We worked hard to help him learn to hold his pencil correctly and keep it steady while he wrote his name. He's a tenacious learner who doesn't give up on the first or second try. He keeps at the task until he achieves his goal! After lots of hard work, now Henry can hold a pencil or crayon correctly, with guidance from me or his mom. We only have to remind him to *pinch* and he does a great job.

Henry loves to read; he will read a book with me, word for word. I'm so proud of how engaged and excited he is to learn.



Did you find a ladybug here?

## It's Kindergarten Registration Time!

Believe it or not, it's time to register for kindergarten! Speak with your SPARK parent partner or check your school district's website for instructions and updates.

### Be ready! Work together to help your child:

- Know first and last name, birthday, address, and phone number
- Identify and name 10 colors
- Identify and name shapes
- Recognize uppercase and lowercase letters
- Retell stories in order (*first...then...and then...*)
- Use and follow location words (*above, below, next to, near*)
- Compare quantities (*many, some, full, empty, less than, more than*)
- Talk about qualities (*big, small, quiet, noisy*)
- Group objects by color, shape, and size
- Make rhyming pairs, like *hat* and *bat*
- Recognize when words begin with the same sound
- Hold books properly
- Count to 20
- Read numbers 0 to 10
- Count 10 objects
- Think about and solve problems (*how can we...?*)



### Five Little Flowers

Sing to the tune of *The Itsy Bitsy Spider*

Five little flowers,  
Standing in the sun.

See their heads nodding,  
Bowing one by one.

Down, down, down,  
Falls the gentle rain.

And the five little flowers  
Lift up their heads again.

Watch the video together online!  
[bit.ly/5lilflows](http://bit.ly/5lilflows)



### Let's be Social!

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

- **Facebook:**  
@SPARKOhio  
@SPARKOHStarkSummit
- **Instagram:** SPARKOhio
- **YouTube:** SPARK Ohio

It's the end of the newsletter! Did you find the ladybug on every page?