

Spice Up Spring Break

Spring Break is right around the corner. Whether you are traveling or staying close to home, make your time memorable with your children by checking out some of these ideas.

At home or close to home

- Cook together – Let your child pick a recipe. Go shopping together for the ingredients. Teach your child about kitchen safety while you prepare food together. This is great time to capture teachable moments about food handling, knife safety, heat source safety, as well as math fractions, units of measure and science principles such as states of matter and chemical reactions.
 - Check out our Pinterest page for recipe ideas.
<http://www.pinterest.com/sindydawk/cooking-with-kids/>
- Teach your child how to access, select and download ebooks from your public library. The Knox County Library Website has a wide selection of books that your child can borrow for 7, 14 or 21 days in an ebook format for a Kindle and other electronic devices. It simply takes a library card and a pin number to access books 24/7 that will keep your child reading. You can access the link to the Knox County Library along with simple instruction on how to borrow and download books from the library at <http://www.knoxlib.org/explore-collection/e-media> .
- For girls have a spa day at home. Give each other pedicures, manicures and facials. Give shoulder massages, style hair, dress up and take pictures.
- Write letters and draw pictures for grandparents and other family members and friend that live far away. Be sure to use those teachable moments to reinforce letter structure, punctuation, proof reading and how to address and mail a letter.
- Plant something – This is the time of year to start your garden plants from seeds. Many herbs and vegetables germinate in as few as seven days. With a little dirt a few seeds and some tender love and care, your starter plants you plant over Spring Break will be ready to plant in the ground in April.

On the road or in the air – Of course travel has been made much easier with the host of games and movies that can be carried with us these days on our tablets and electronic devices; however if you want to connect with your children a bit more while traveling, try some of these ideas.

- If traveling by car play license plate scavenger hunt. As a family, see how many different license plates you can find. Take along a US map so your children can look up the states on the map. Use this activity to reinforce geography, regions of the US, state capitals, national landmarks and history.
- Play the alphabet game using billboards to search out the alphabet from A-Z. Play cooperatively as a family or make it a competition. Add a twist by deciding on a six to ten letter word. Look for the letters in order on billboards and signs. Write the word in which you found each letter.
- Teach your child a sing-a-long song from your childhood.

- Research your destination and make a scavenger hunt game based on your destination. Look for landmarks, history, points of interest, characters of interest or interesting trivia.
- Based on your child's age, teach your child to play pen and paper games such as Sudoku, hangman, tic-tac-toe, dot and box and stop gate. Check out some more unique pencil and paper games at <http://www.papg.com/>.
- Teach your child to make mandala drawings. Make cooperative mandalas by giving each person a different color marker and a piece of paper. Start a design and then swap papers. Each person takes turns adding design elements to each mandala.

