It's the Holiday Season!

Hello! Welcome to the Autism Caregiver Group Newsletter! This month, we have many opportunities for involvement in our organization. There are also some activities included for your family to do this holiday season, or during winter break from school!

Be sure to check out the new date for our December coffee chat, and the opportunity for your child(ren) to have a pen pal!

Resources

We are showcasing a couple of different resources this month. First, is the Organization for Autism Research. They have very informative articles about Autism and for families with children who have Autism. They are listed below:

- Parent IEP Meeting Success
- Speech Therapy Reinforcement

Another resource is the Autism Resource Institute. They have a free webinar series on their website. The webinar lasts approximately one hour, and highlights the importance of exercise while staying home more often during COVID-19. The webinar link is found here.
Involvement Opportunities

Things to Do with NIU Autism Caregiver Group

Joke: What's a Snowman's Favorite Breakfast? Frosted Flakes!

Activities
Check out our featured activities of the month: Exercise YouTube Videos: Joybob The Polar Bear Yoga: http://go.niu.edu/h8wv6 Winter Wonderland Workout: http://go.niu.edu/knc9qn

Book Read Alouds (YouTube):
Winter is Here: http://go.niu.edu/tmw84p Sneezy the Snowman: http://go.niu.edu/7ywir

Pen Pal Program
If your child(ren) would like to have a pen pal with a student from the NIU communicative disorders student association (undergraduate speech pathology and audiology students) please send an email to Dr. Gladfelter (agladfelter@niu.edu) to get paired with a student! Be sure to send how many kids will be writing, their names, and ages! Also, for the holiday season, we are offering a letter from Santa option! If you are interested in learning more details, please email Dr. Gladfelter (agladfelter@niu.edu).

New to Autism Caregiver Group?
Welcome!
Please check out our information below!

Coffee Chat
The NIU Autism Caregiver Group is virtual this year! If you would like to join our Caregiver Coffee Chat, please RSVP by emailing Allison Gladfelter at agladfelter@niu.edu to receive the private Zoom link. Our next Caregiver Coffee Chat will be on Friday, December 11th, from 1-2pm. For more information about our group, please visit our website, http://go.niu.edu/ag2xx7.

Dial-in Information:
Email Dr. Allison Gladfelter to receive a private Zoom link.

NIU Student Volunteers
If your family would like to have a volunteer do a video call with your child(ren) and do a craft, read a book, or do an activity, please contact Dr. Gladfelter via email at agladfelter@niu.edu. Also, please include information about which days and times work for your family, how many kids will be on the call and their ages, and any other information you would like the volunteer to know.

Activities
Three craft activities are attached to this newsletter to try! As usual, we suggest your family pairs up with an NIU student volunteer to complete them! You can also do the activities on your own, as a list of materials needed and directions are provided. See ‘NIU Student Volunteer’ section for more details!
Instructions: Connect the dots to complete the picture and color!
Puffy Snow Paint

Materials:

- 1 cup white glue
- 2 cups shaving cream
- ½ Cup flour
- Glitter
- Paintbrush
- Construction paper
- Extras to decorate snowman: googly eyes, craft foam, buttons, pipe cleaners, paper hats, ribbon

Instructions:

- Make snow paint: Mix white glue, shaving cream, and flour together in a cup and add glitter.
- Using a paintbrush, make a snowman figure on a piece of construction paper.
- When still wet, you can now decorate your snowman. You can use the items mentioned in the materials section, or use anything you have at home!
- Decoration Ideas: Craft foam for the nose, buttons for the body, paper for a hat, ribbon for a scarf, pipe cleaners for arms. (Remember, you can substitute any of these items with things you have at home!)
Snow Globe Craft

Materials:

- Plastic container or jar with lid
- Baby oil
- White paint (snow effect)
- Water
- Optional: Glue gun and snowman figure or any other figure to stick onto lid
- Extras: Glitter, snowflakes

Instructions:

- Fill the container with baby oil, leave a small section at the top unfilled.
- Add in choice of glitter and snowflakes or preferred extras.
- In a separate container, mix 1 cup of water with teaspoon of white acrylic paint. Stir together well.
- Pour diluted paint into snow globe, filling the rest of the top section, and screw lid on.
- Optional: attach snowman figure or other figure onto lid with glue gun, and slowly put lid on with attached figure.
- Turn snow globe upside down to start the snow.