

Hello Families!

I want you to know that during these unprecedented times we miss you and your children very much. As the weather has been so nice this week, I have decided to do a little science and art lesson plan for you and your children to do at home. As always please feel free reach out by email at [lisa.stevens@abilitiesfirst.org](mailto:lisa.stevens@abilitiesfirst.org) or by my cell phone at 513-318-9068.

I am sure that many of us are feeling a bit stir crazy in these unprecedented times, I know I am. As I have transitioned to a work from home model (which sounds crazy for a early childhood educator, I have had to figure out ways to help my own stir craziness! Outside my window is a hill and I saw and heard a lot of birds so I trudded out mask and all to get a bird feeder. As I have watched this bird feeder for the last several days, I have become fascinated so here are a few ideas to help engage your little ones the way I have been engaged.

So here are a few ideas...

### **FIRST - LOOK WITH YOUR EYES**

Make some homemade binoculars with some toilet paper rolls (not a hot Commodity as the paper it holds, LOL!) you can also use paper towel rolls in half.

Items needed...

- Paper towel rolls or toilet paper rolls
- Tape – Masking or something somewhat sturdy
- Cayons, washable markers, stickers etc. for decoration

Tape the rolls together with masking tape or some type of sturdy tape .

Allow children to color and decorate.

If it is safe you can even put holes on each side and tie a string so they can hold the binoculars around their necks.

Some children may not want the binoculars so some variations are sitting near a tree and watching with a naked eye, looking at some nature videos online about birds and then going on a scavenger hunt to find birds.

Another Free resource is to go to Cincinnati Zoo and botanical Garden website and look for Home Safari Resources. There is a Macaw resource and a Bald Eagle resource if going out is not an option. You can also look on you tube at Free Flight Aviary – Cincinnati Zoo.

### **SECOND - LISTEN WITH YOUR EARS**

I know get my child to listen to animals that will fly away when we make noise, right!! Here are some ways first get your childs' attention while looking for the birds. First, spot

the bird. Second, start looking while you quietly say shhhhh with your finger over your mouth. Third, when you find one use your face to show the excitement not your voice and point out the birds.

If you are unable to go outside you can go to you tube kids and type in bird sounds for kids part one. Bird Identification – Children learn common city birds.

### **THIRD – CONNECT**

Some things you can do to help your child continue to connect is to talk about different foods birds like and since we may not be able to get to the store to buy bird seed here is a list of common household foods birds like. If you have some bird seed then you can make a bird feeder from peanut butter, Molasses, honey, sun butter and pine cones.

Tie a string to the pine cone, hold with the string while your child rolls or smoothers the sticky item to the pine cone then roll in the bird seed. If you do not have these items see below for a list of other options.

#### **Attract backyard birds with these common kitchen food items.**

##### **Apples**

Biggest fans: Eastern bluebird, pine grosbeak, gray catbird, northern cardinal, northern flicker, American robin, scarlet tanager, cedar waxwing and red-bellied woodpecker.

Serving suggestion: Slice them up and remove the seeds. Or slice them in half, scooping out part of the fruit and filling with sugar-water, and skewer one on a feeder to attract hummingbirds, like the one seen here.

##### **Bananas**

Biggest fans: Northern cardinal, gray catbird, gray jay, scarlet tanager.

Serving suggestion: Remove the peel and cut in half lengthwise.

##### **Cooked pasta and rice**

Biggest fans: Blue jay, brown thrasher, tufted titmouse, red-bellied woodpecker.

Serving suggestion: Serve both plain, and chop pasta into little bits to make it easier to eat.

## **Eggshells**

Biggest fans: Any bird eating your seed, as well as purple martin and barn and tree swallow.

Serving suggestion: Bake clean shells at 250 degrees for 15 minutes. Crush and set out in a dish, or mix in birdseed. They're a fine source of calcium for egg laying.

## **Hard cheese**

Biggest fans: Gray catbird, brown thrasher, Carolina wren.

Serving suggestion: Dice hard cheese into little chunks, and be sure there's no mold, which could be harmful. Please avoid soft cheeses.

## **Melon, pumpkin and squash seeds**

Biggest fans: Northern cardinal, evening grosbeak, red-breasted nuthatch, tufted titmouse.

Serving suggestion: Roast in oven first.

## **Peanut butter**

Biggest fans: Too many to name, including black-capped chickadee, brown creeper, white-breasted nuthatch, wood thrush, wrens and woodpeckers.

Serving suggestion: Drop a dollop in a dried-out orange half left from oriole season, or spread over a pinecone.

## **Raisins**

Biggest fans: Eastern bluebird, northern cardinal, gray catbird, northern mockingbird, orioles, American robin, scarlet tanager, brown thrasher, wood thrush, cedar waxwing, and red-bellied and red-headed woodpecker.

Serving suggestion: Soak raisins in warm water first so they're soft and easier for birds to bite.

Going forward each week starting next week there will be some type of Lessons for you to do with your children as always we miss you stay safe, stay well and most of all stay home! Hugs from abilities First!