

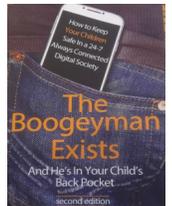


## Jesse Weinburger Internet Safety

We were fortunate to be able to present to our parents via Zoom, Jesse “Big Mama” Weinburger, an internet safety speaker for schools on April 13 or 15, 2021. She’s the host of the Internet Safety Podcast: Big Mama’s House Podcast, has authored the book, *The Boogeyman Exists: And He’s In Your Child’s Back Pocket, a guide for parents and educators on how to keep children safe in a 24-7 always connected digital society*. According to research, much of the technology that was designed to connect us is having the opposite effect. In addition to increased depression and anxiety, excessive screen time can lead to addictive behaviors, poor sleep, psychosocial and other problems. Jesse gave the parents the following suggestions for managing social media in families lives:

- ⇒ Mom and Dad: take social media apps off of YOUR phones.
- ⇒ Entire family: turn off all app notifications and use “Do Not Disturb” settings at night.
- ⇒ Entire family: dial back the number of minutes/hours spent on devices – even if it’s just a little at first. No phone use less than an hour before bed.
- ⇒ Entire family: Cut back on the total number of social media apps used. Remember children are not allowed to have any social media under 13 years old, per federal COPPA standards.
- ⇒ House: Create geographic no-phone-zones in your house and abide by them yourself.
- ⇒ Read for pleasure on paper versus e-reader (exception is paperwhite)
- ⇒ Avoid cognitive and eye fatigue – watch programs on you TV versus laptop or phone.

It is a fact that everybody needs routine, to feel connection, and to feel seen. So it is very important that parents need to stay informed with the fast pace of the continuously changing social media platforms that is always present in our lives. Parents will be given a copy of the Jesse’s book for participating in the Zoom presentation.



## Spring Family Engagements

The LIL Cats held two family engagements this Spring. Spring into Easter family engagement centered around the excitement of Easter. Students were given an Easter bag with candy filled colored plastic eggs, a Math and Reading packet, and ideas of how to use the eggs to enrich math and reading skills after their family Easter Egg Hunt. Students that returned their surveys received a chocolate rabbit sucker and was entered into a drawing for an Easter basket. **The winners were Megan Taylor and Eli Dore.** The second engagement provided the families with a theatre experience in their homes. The Cincinnati’s Children’s Theatre provided links for the play *The Velveteen Rabbit* a retelling of the award-winning classic tale of a stuffed toy rabbit in a modern and delightfully electric holiday musical. For those students that did not have the capabilities to watch the play at home, the afterschool provided a time for the students to have the theater experience at school. Students that returned the parent survey received the book *The Velveteen Rabbit* by Margery Williams Bianco and a game the whole family could enjoy together.





## SNAP-Ed Classes

SNAP-Ed (Supplemental Nutrition Education Program) is an evidence-based program that helps people make better food choices for healthier lives.

Tina Elkins from the OSU extension office of Gallia county has provided the LIL Cats Afterschool program with 2 virtual hands-on programs through Zoom on healthy diets and better life choices. The K-2 program was led by Tina Elkins and her sidekick Lana the Igua-na puppet assisted by Peggy Jensen from Lawrence county and Jillian Davis from Meigs county. Lana takes the children on virtual field trips to learn about the food they eat, where the food is grown, and how the food is made available to them. Some of the virtual visits were to an orchard, a grocery store, and a creamery are some of the places that were visited. Children had lessons on the importance of exercise and being healthy. The 3-5 program provided hands-on lessons on reading labels, portion sizes, identifying, sorting, categorizing food groups, and experiments led by Tina with the help of the classroom teachers providing the guidance in the classroom. Through the hands-on experiments students will be able to incorporate making better eating choices in their daily lives. The children have really enjoyed the classes.



## STEM-MOBILES

LIL Cats enjoyed the hands-on activity of building mobiles, a free-hanging sculpture that can move in the air, during a STEM activity. Students were given their pieces of foam to decorate using a farm theme for Right to Read Week, string, and a wooden rod to suspend their art work. Students were challenged to use the trial by error method to arrange their pieces of art hanging from the rod so that the rod would hang parallel with the ground. Students worked with concepts of forces, gravity, balance (equal forces), and the simple machine the lever. Students were proud of their work and displayed them throughout the school.



## Virtual Field Trip: Science Interactives Gallery by Cincinnati Museum Center

The LIL Cats program ended this year with a virtual field trip provided by the Cincinnati Museum Center of their interactive gallery of simple machines. Students curiosity was sparked during the guided tour of the Science Interactive section of the museum. The guides demonstrated each interactive in the gallery and explained the science concepts that the interactive represented. Students investigated simple machines such the pully, levers, gears, and discovered how they can make jobs easier by distributing the weight of an object. Energy in the form of gravitational potential and kinetic energy was explored during the tour. Invisible energy, heat, wind (air), and temperature was made visible using the interactives during the tour.



## And Then Comes Summer Book Walk

LIL Cats planned a book walk at their school on April 8, 2021, but due to inclement weather the book walk was postponed until April 20, 2021. Parents will be invited to arrive at their leisure between 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm at the school to enjoy the bookwalk, *And Then Comes Summer* by Tome Brenner that will meander around the school's playground which will provide for social distancing. Families will enjoy stations such as The Bossard Library. They plan on handing out their children's summer schedule, other programming advantages for parents, and a summer themed craft to all students. Michael-Ann from Easter Seals will have a station that will focus on Dolly Parton's Imagination Library information. Each child will be given a ticket when they sign-in to be used after the walk to pick out a book of their very own to take home. Families will receive a first aid kit, The Home Front newsletter, After-school newsletter and other tokens of appreciation.



Don't miss out on the [Treasure Your Family](#) a month long event. Engage with your family by visiting local places such as Mound Hill, Bob Evan's Farms, O.O. McIntyre Park. Some engaging family activities to do this month have a picnic lunch in the park, walk the bike trail, or play a family game of cornhole. You'll be creating good memories that you will cherish for a life time.



# 1. Exercise Together

Head outside after dinner for a family walk or bike ride, enjoy a weekend hike or paddle at your local nature preserve, or work together toward a 5K.

# 2. Learn Something New

Encourage your kids to try something they've always wanted to learn, such as a new instrument, drawing, a foreign language, or coding. Summer is a great time for parents to take up a new hobby as well.

# 3. Be Creative

Busy families often lose touch with their creative side during the school year. Now is the time to find it again. Dust off your paints, your camera, that forgotten novel you started writing a few years ago, and indulge in creating just for the fun of it.

# 4. Unplug

Modern technology has made our lives easier in so many ways, but it can also drain your time and energy. Try unplugging one day each week and just being together as a family. Play games, make food, read books.

# 5. Become a Tourist in Your Hometown

When was the last time you visited your local museum, zoo, or nature trail? When you live somewhere long enough, you tend to forget about the amazing places that make your town special.

# 6. Give Back to Your Community

Volunteering in the summer can be fun, educational, and rewarding. Whether you work an event or festival, walk dogs at the local animal shelter, or raise money for a family in need, there are countless opportunities to help out in your community.

# 7. Eat outside

Picnics in the park, dinners on the porch, and ice cream at the beach — summer offers countless opportunities to relax with your family and enjoy a meal together.

# 8. Prevent the Summer Slide

Even if you don't officially "do school" in the summer, it's important to keep up with academics. You don't want to give your kids the message that school is something to "escape from" in the summer. You can certainly lighten the course load, but don't give it up altogether.

# 9. Read together

There's still a lot of fun to be had in your family room if you have a bookshelf. Take turns reading aloud and discussing books together.