

# Winter Wonder Play

## with sparkler

AN ACTIVITY BOOK FOR SPARKLER FAMILIES  
WITH TODDLERS AND YOUNG CHILDREN



## About Sparkler

Sparkler is a mobile app for parents and caregivers, available for families with young children (prenatal–age 5) in different cities and states across the USA (including Connecticut, Ohio, Utah, Wisconsin, San Francisco, and Alameda, CA). Sparkler's app is available for FREE for iOS and Android devices in English, Spanish, Chinese, French, and Arabic.

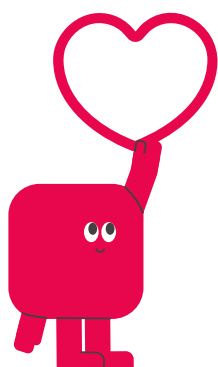
Your family can use Sparkler to:

- **Know:** Understand your child's development with the mobile Ages & Stages Questionnaires® (ASQ).
- **Play:** Spark early learning with fun, off-screen play activities to practice early skills with your child.
- **Grow:** Follow your child's progress reaching milestones.
- **Connect:** Get answers or support from your program, whether it's a school, family resource center, home visitor, doctor, or a centralized access point like 211 Child Development in Connecticut, Help Me Grow in Ohio or Utah, or Support for Families in San Francisco.

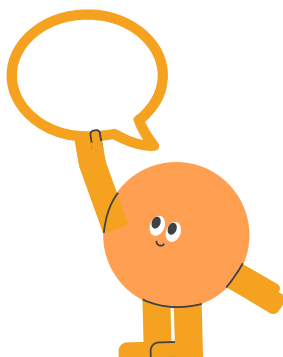
To download the mobile app, scan this QR code and create your account. Remember to use your program's access code to get local support!



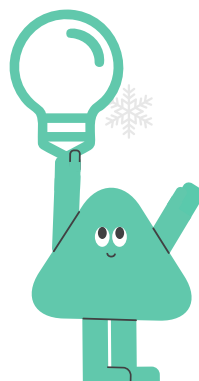
This activity book is designed to help families work with their children to grow stronger hearts, words, minds, and bodies. These are the four Sparkler friends! Each one represents an area of learning:



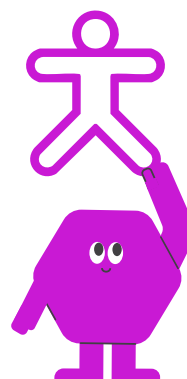
Heart



Words



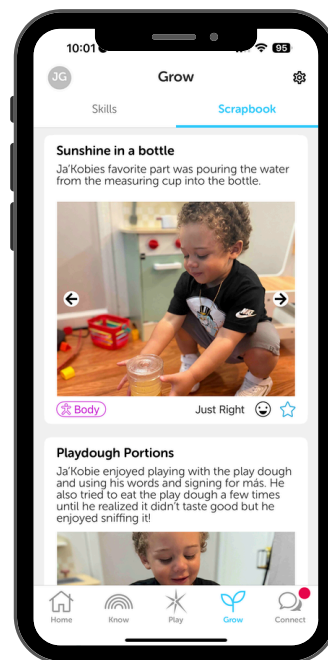
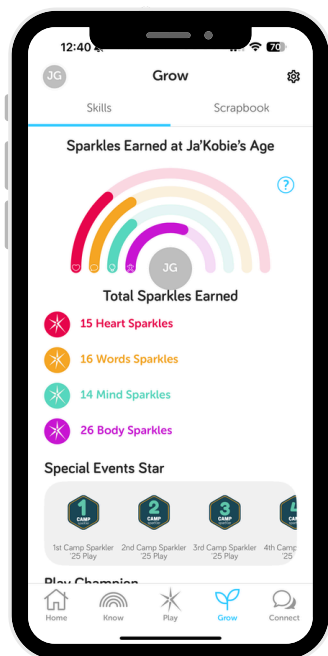
Mind



Body

Families can explore here and then scan the QR code on the page to find related activities in the Sparkler mobile app.

Play along in the app by pressing “We Did It” and adding a photo to grow your memories. Track all that you learn together with your child in your Sparkler scrapbook!



Watch your child's rainbow grow as you make progress together! As you play each activity, you'll also be able to earn Sparkles and digital badges along the way.

# Grow smarter, kinder, and braver with Sparkler this winter!

This book belongs to:

3

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- 1 Try the activity with your grown-ups!
- 2 Scan QR code to keep track of your completed plays, using the Sparkler app.
- 3 Earn Sparkles and watch how your child's heart, mind, words, and body grow!





# Snowman Freeze Dance

Start and stop to build self-regulation skills.

- 1 Let's pretend we're snowflakes or snowmen in the winter snow. When the music plays, we dance and twirl. When it stops, we freeze. If you have winter clothes, put them on so you look like a snowman!
- 2 I'll play the music. Let's twirl, jump, and glide like snowflakes. How else can you move like a snowflake floating in the air?
- 3 I'll pause the music and say "Freeze!" Then we stand still like the Snowman waiting quietly. When the music returns, we drift and twirl like snowflakes again.



We Did It!

Don't forget to add this activity to your Sparkler scrapbook!

Heart

Freeze dancing helps children practice self-regulation while building big muscle strength through jumping, twirling, and moving their bodies.

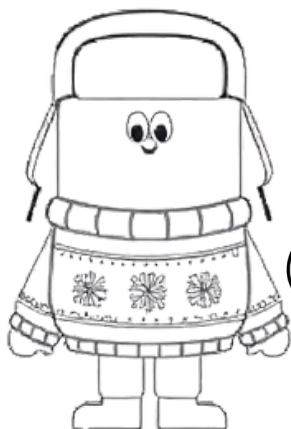


# Let's do the snowman dance

Help our Sparkler friends bring the snowman finger puppet to life!

Color, cut, and dance together.

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Take a picture and  
scrapbook this activity in  
you Sparkler scrapbook.

# Snow Dough

Create and play with dough to build hand strength!

- 1 Let's celebrate winter by making our own snowy dough.
- 2 Let's mix 2 cups of baking soda with  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of white hair conditioner in a large bowl.
- 3 Let's squeeze and roll the dough to make a snowman. Add sticks, pebbles, or anything from outdoors to bring it to life. How do your hands feel after playing with the dough?



We Did It!

Don't forget to add this activity to your Sparkler scrapbook!

 Body

Playing with snow dough strengthens fine motor (small muscle) skills while giving children a fun way to squeeze, shape, and explore texture.



# Let's Get Creative

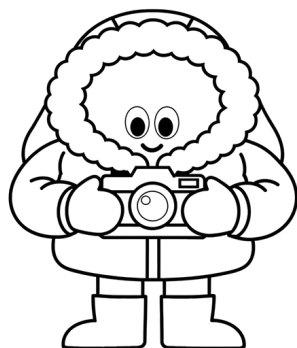
Let's play with our snow dough. Find different items in the home to encourage curiosity and spark your child's imagination as they experiment, discover, and create.

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## Home Items



- 1 Collect a few safe kitchen tools, like a spoon, measuring cup, whisk, cookie cutter, or fork. Look at each one together and guess what kind of shape or pattern it might make in the snow dough.
- 2 Use the tools to make different marks in the snow dough. Notice the lines, circles, and textures they create.
- 3 Create a winter picture, like a snowy path or cookies. Take a photo of your artwork."



Take a picture and scrapbook this activity in you Sparkler scrapbook.

# Penguin Waddle

Waddle like a penguin

- 1 Let's pretend to be penguins walking on the ice!
- 2 Let's hold a small pillow or soft ball between our knees. Squeeze your knees together so that it doesn't drop!
- 3 Waddle like a Penguin! Try to move without letting the ball drop.



We Did It!

Don't forget to add this activity to your Sparkler scrapbook!

 Body

Activities that involve waddling, turning, and staying steady help your child develop big muscles, core strength, and coordination.

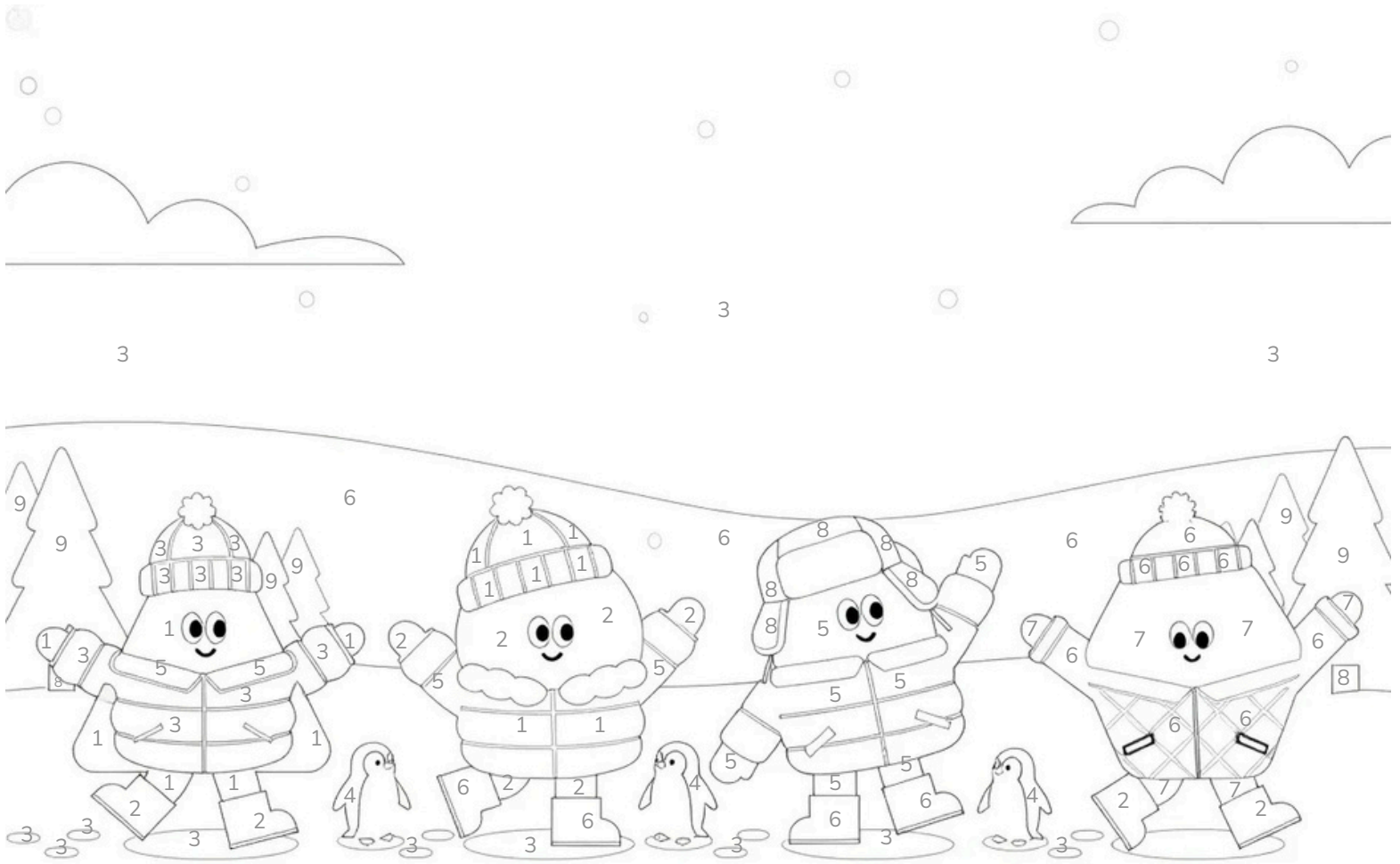
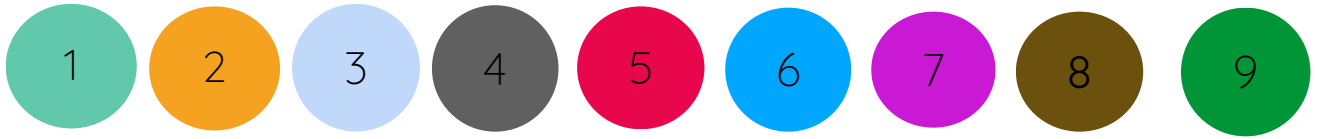
 Help Me Grow  
Connecticut





# Penguin Waddle

Help the Sparkler Friends color by number.



Take a picture and scrapbook this activity in you Sparkler scrapbook.

# Ice Skate Walk

Pretend skate to build muscles and coordination.

- 1 Let's pretend to ice skate across a frozen pond!
- 2 Wearing our slippery socks on our feet, let's slide our feet across the floor one at a time — making slow, smooth movements, just like ice skating!
- 3 Let's glide from one side of the room to the other!



We Did It!

Don't forget to add this activity to your Sparkler scrapbook!

 Body

Sliding, gliding, and staying steady help your child build balance, core strength, and coordination.

 Help Me Grow  
Connecticut's Early Childhood Program



# Ice Skate Walk

Help our Sparkler friend glide from one side to the other. Trace the pattern to help our Sparkler friend glide to the other side.



Take a picture and scrapbook this activity in you Sparkler scrapbook.

# Winter in a Jar

Shake and explore a winter scene!

- 1 Let's create a winter snow globe!
- 2 Add water to the jar, mix in glitter and tiny objects, plus a bit of glue. Secure the lid so it's sealed well.
- 3 Let's shake our jar and watch the "snow" swirl and fall . How does watching our snow globe make you feel?



We Did It!

Don't forget to add this activity to your Sparkler scrapbook!

♥ Heart

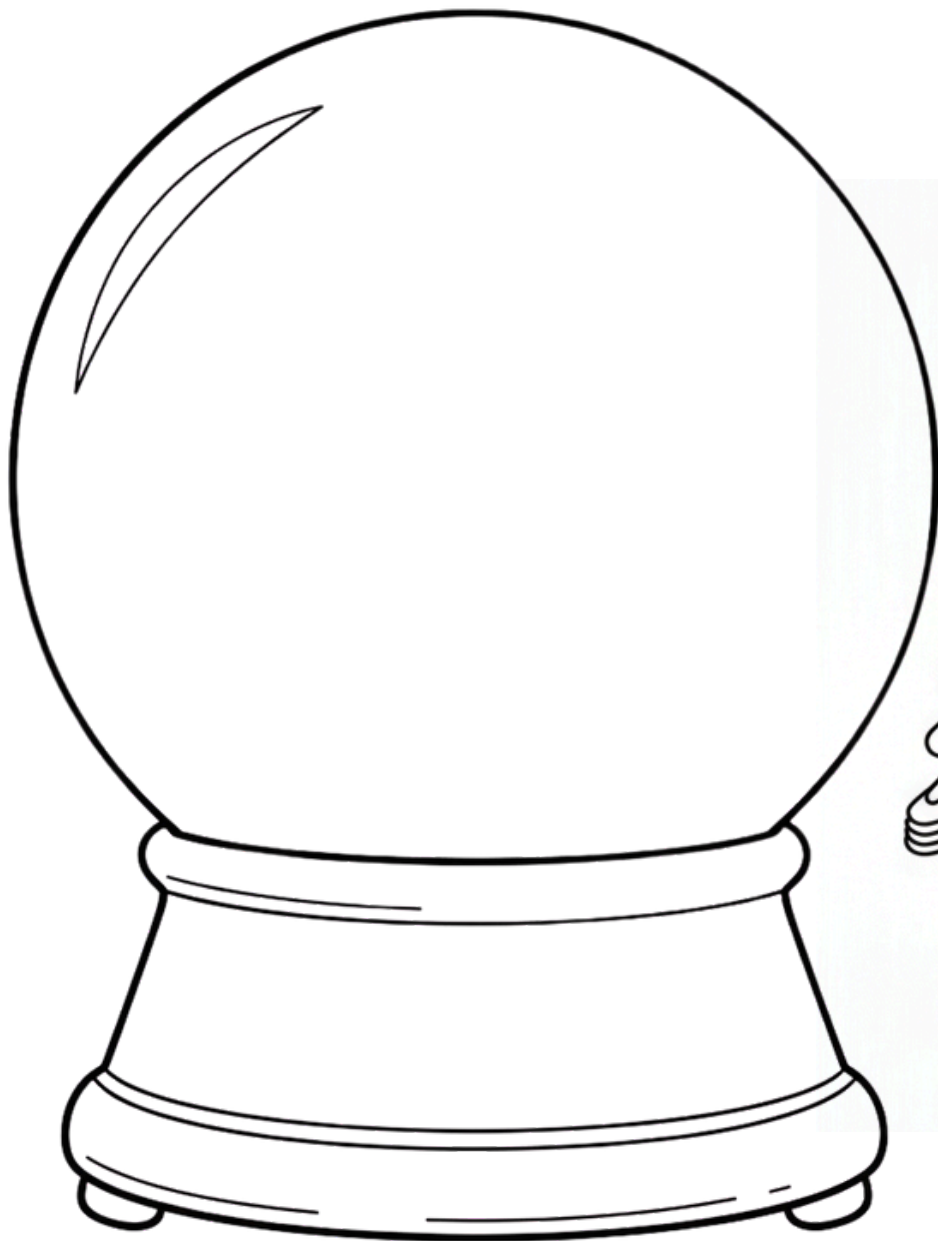
Exploring calming scenes helps your child understand feelings, build emotional awareness, and practice noticing what brings comfort.



# Winter in a Jar

Let's help our Sparkler Friends design their own snow globe!

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Take a picture and scrapbook this activity in you Sparkler scrapbook.



# Winter Animal Dens

## Winter Dens

- 1 Discover the different ways animals spend the winter, from deep sleep to snug hideaways.
- 2 Pick an animal and build a cozy home for it using blocks, tiles, play-doh, cardboard, or any favorite materials.
- 3 What does the animal's home look like? What special features does the winter den have?



We Did It!

Don't forget to add this activity to your Sparkler scrapbook!



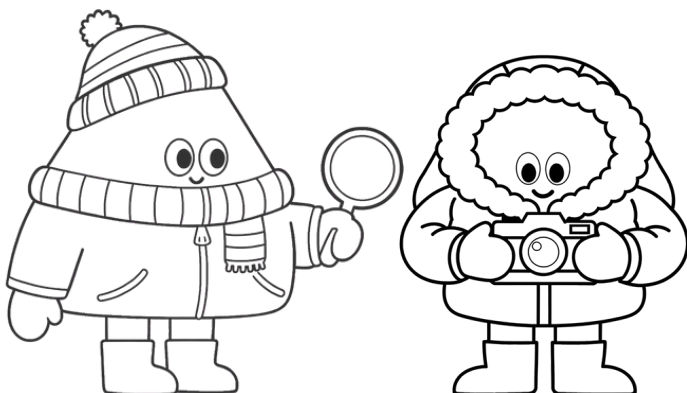
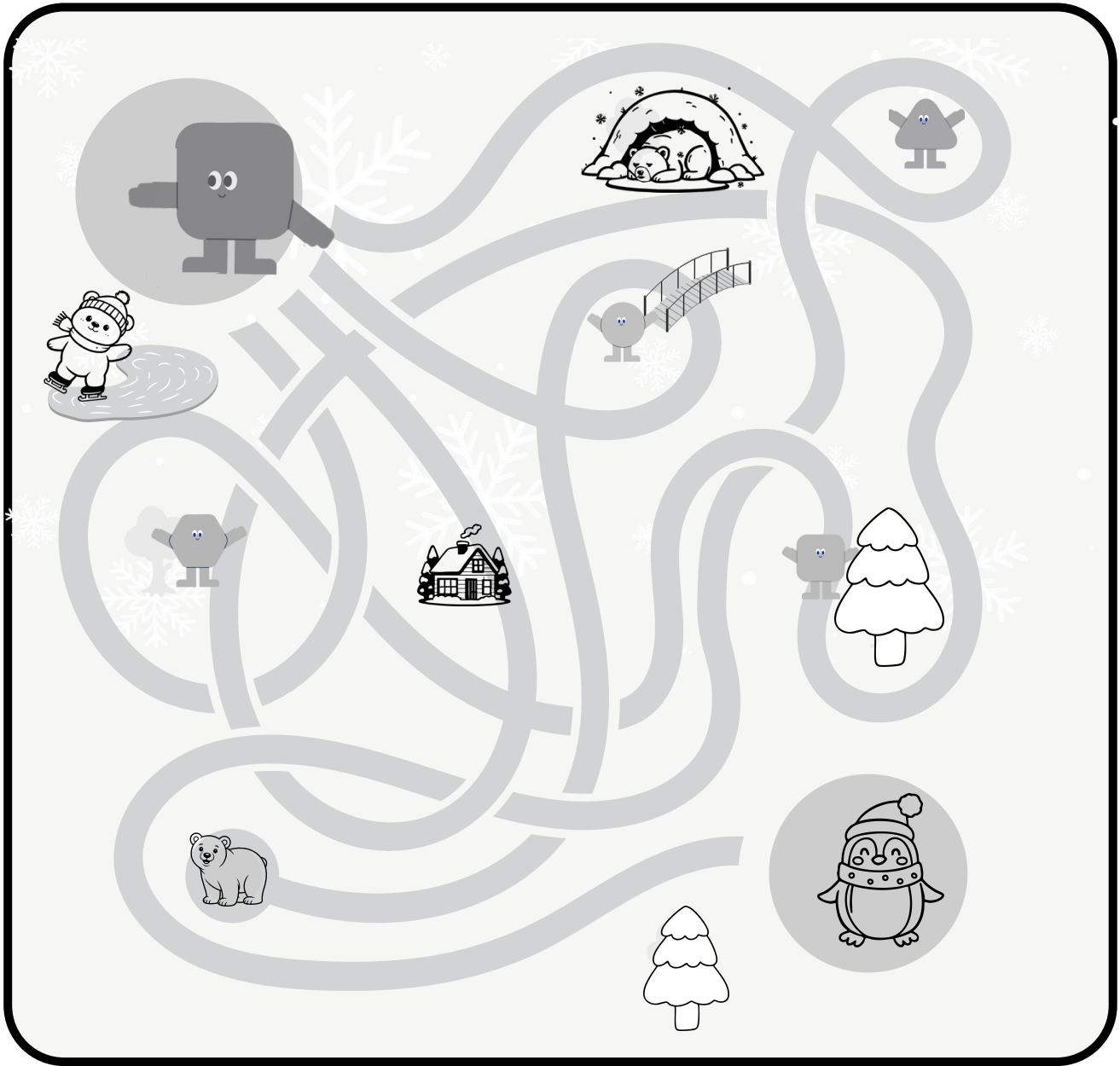
Mind

Building winter dens boosts creativity and flexible thinking while strengthening little hands as children stack and shape materials.



# Let's Find the winter animals

Can you find all the winter animals in the picture?



Take a picture and scrapbook this activity in you Sparkler scrapbook.

# Find Winter Animals

Build flexible thinking while finding hidden animals!

- 1 Let's find some winter animals! I'm going to build a house out of Magnatiles or blocks to hide the animals. Then let's look for them!
- 2 Can you spot the animals? Knock down the blocks or magnetic tiles to reveal them!
- 3 What animals did we find? Let's do it again!



We Did It!

Don't forget to add this activity to your Sparkler scrapbook!



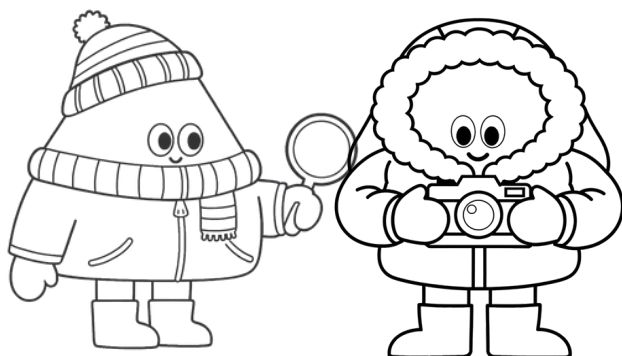
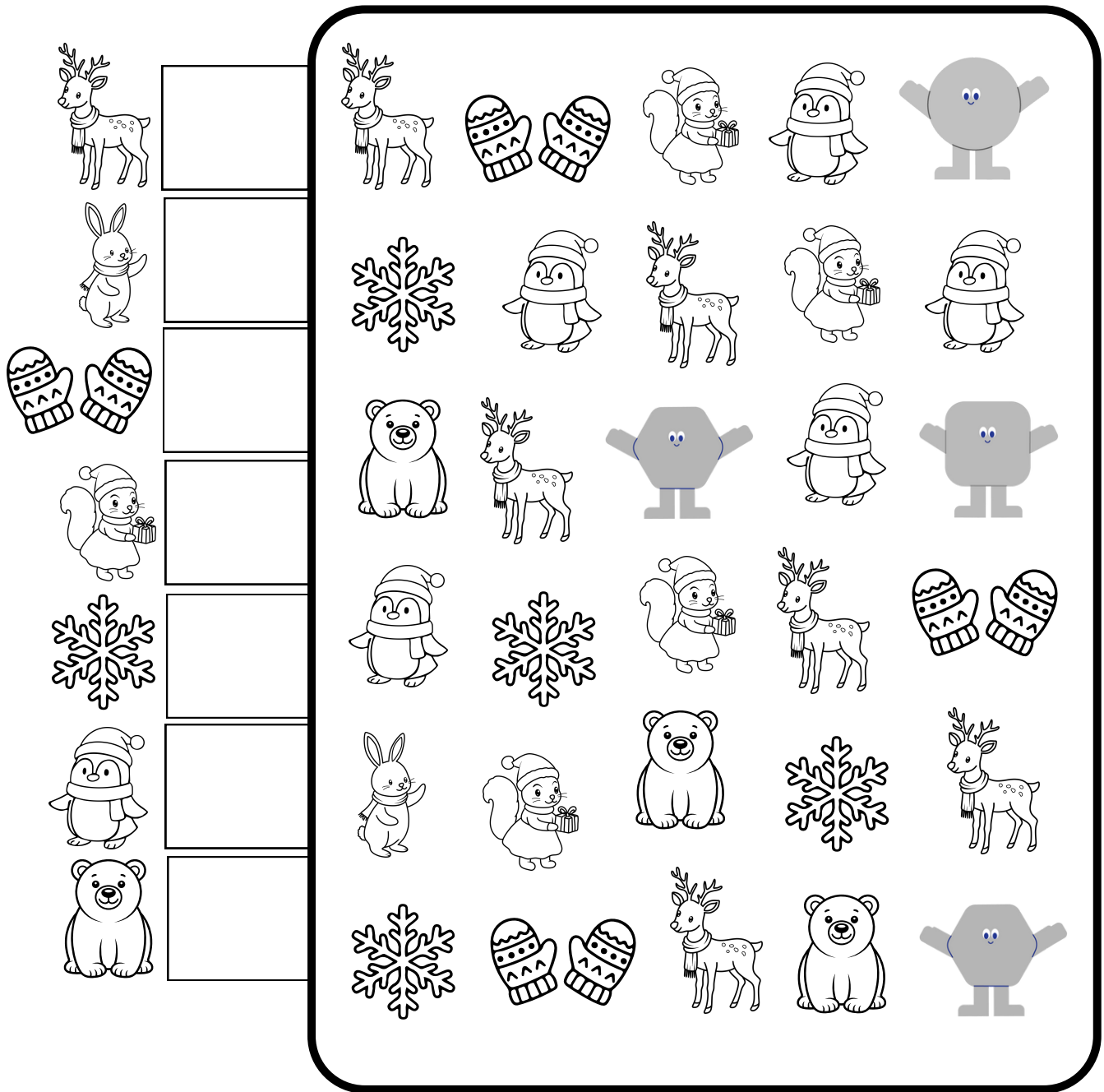
Mind

Finding winter animals helps children build flexible thinking as they search for what's hidden, while strengthening motor skills as they knock down the blocks and pick up the animals.



# Winter Symbols

How many winter symbols can you find in the picture?



Take a picture and scrapbook this activity in you Sparkler scrapbook.



# Holiday Cards

## Create cards

- 1 We feel happy when people say nice things to us! Let's make a holiday card to help someone we love feel good.
- 2 Let's sit together so you can watch closely and we can chat as we create. I'll fold a piece of colored paper in half. Now, I'll cut a snowflake or snowman out of white paper and glue it down — or use a q-tip to paint some white snow on the front of our card. We made a pretty wintery picture together!
- 3 What should we say inside? It's important to tell other people how much we care! Now, let's deliver it!



We Did It!



Don't forget to add this activity to your Sparkler scrapbook!

♥ Heart

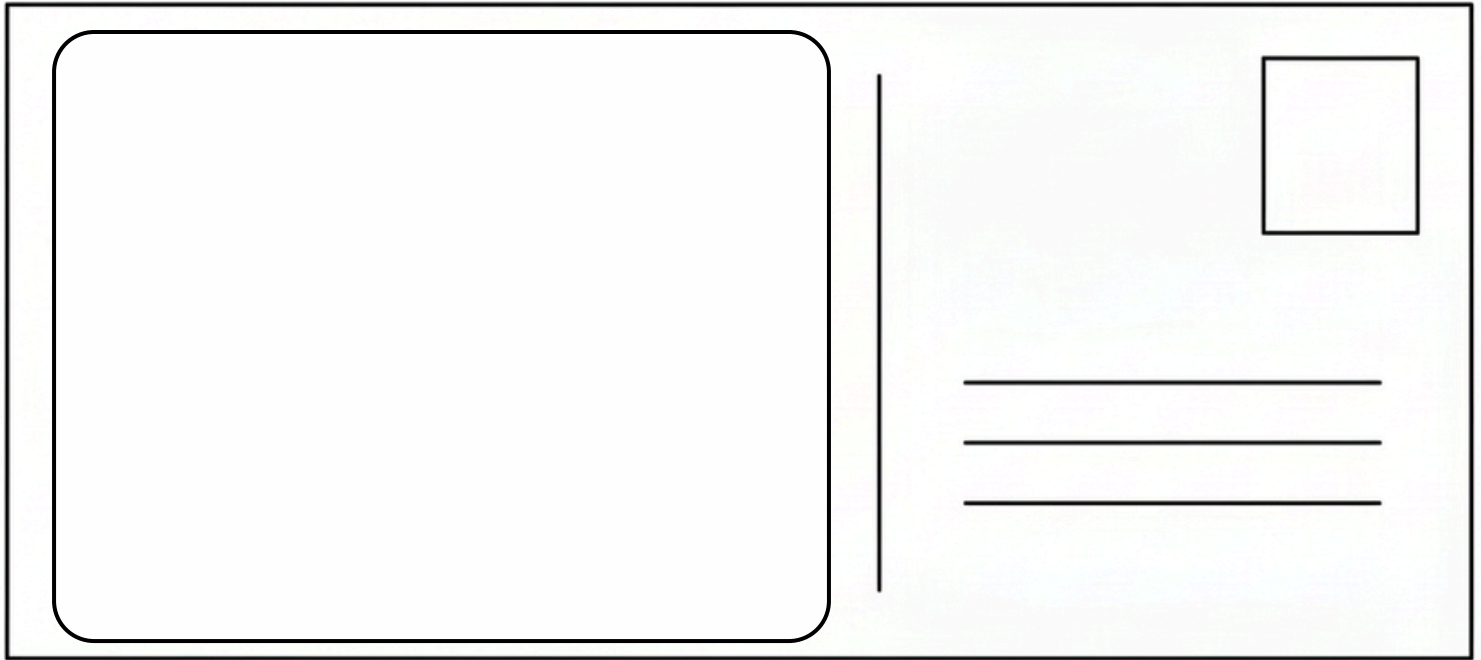
Spending time together builds trust and attachment.



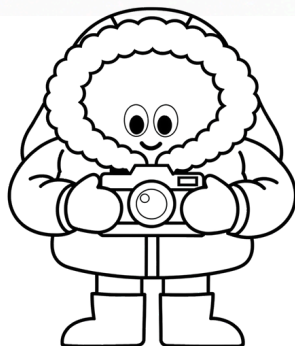
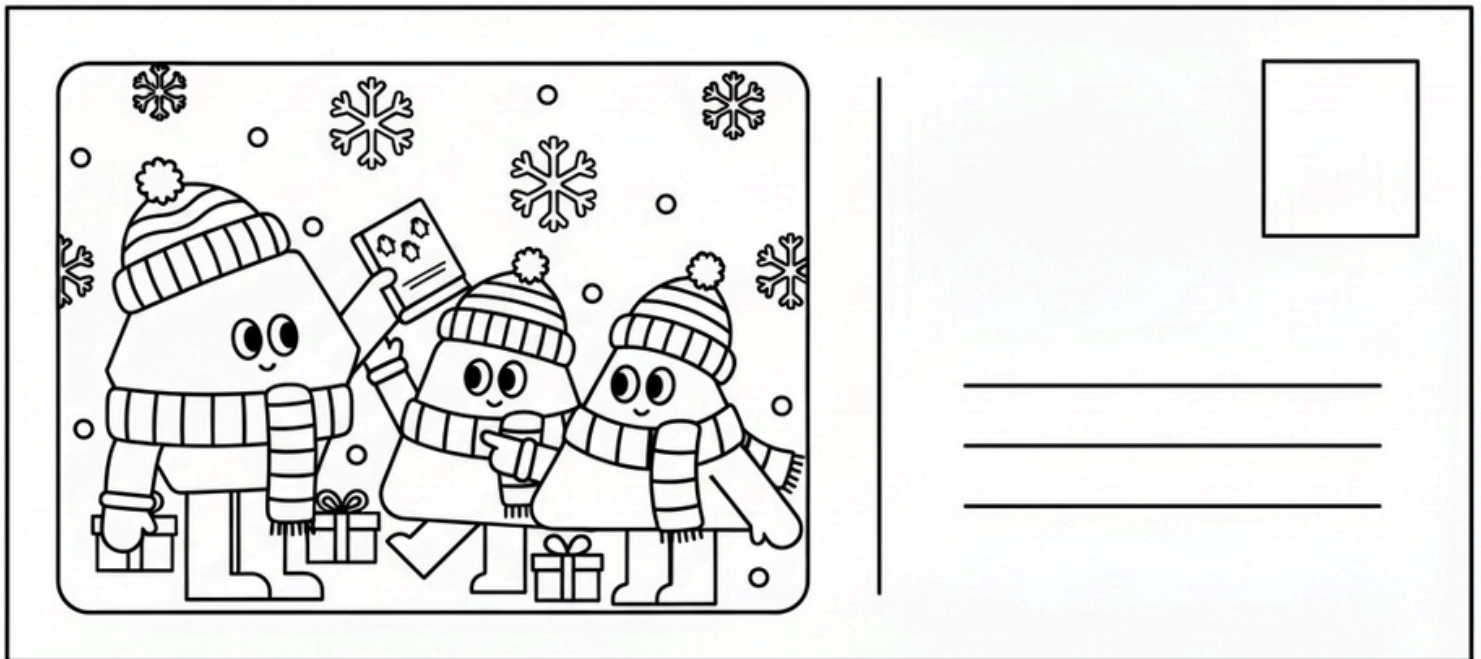


# Holiday Cards

Help our Sparkler Friends create and color their holiday cards.



Fold



Take a picture and scrapbook this activity in you Sparkler scrapbook.

# Holiday Cookie Chef

Bake and share cookies!

- 1 It's holiday cookie time! Let's wash our hands with soap and water, then preheat the oven to 350°F to get it ready.
- 2 Add these to a big bowl: 1 cup sugar, ½ cup oil, 1 egg, and 2 tsp vanilla. Stir it all together. Next, mix in 1½ cups flour, 1½ tsp baking powder, and 1 tsp salt. We made dough!
- 3 Roll the dough into small balls and set them on the baking sheet. You can brush on a little butter and add cinnamon sugar or colored sugar for fun. Keep the cookies spaced out so they have room to grow in the oven. I'll bake them for 11 minutes. Once they cool, we can share them with our favorite people.



We Did It!

Don't forget to add this activity to your Sparkler scrapbook!

 Body

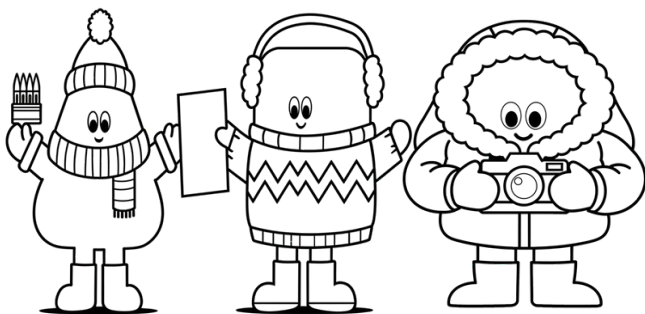
Measuring, mixing, and shaping dough helps children strengthen small muscles and practice coordination, while sharing the cookies helps to build social and emotional skills.



# Cookie Decoration Challenge

Can you help our Sparkler Friends decorate cookies for the holidays?

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Take a picture and scrapbook this activity in you Sparkler scrapbook.

# Keep learning and growing together every day with Sparkler!

Learn about all the milestones your child is achieving, play to learn every day, and connect to someone who can help you if you have questions or need support.

## Questions?

Questions about Sparkler? Learn more at [playsparkler.org](https://playsparkler.org) or email [support@playsparkler.org](mailto:support@playsparkler.org) with questions. Questions about your child's development? Connect with your program or your local centralized access point through Sparkler or by phone!

**Connecticut:** 211 Child Development: 1-800-505-7000

**Ohio:** Help Me Grow Ohio: (800) 755-GROW (4769)

**Kenosha:** Help Me Grow Kenosha: 262-300-9040

**Utah:** Help Me Grow Utah: 211 / 801-691-5322

**San Francisco:** Support for Families: 415-920-5040

**Alameda:** First 5 Alameda: (888) 510-1211

