

Letter to Families

Send families a letter introducing the study. Use the letter to communicate with families and as an opportunity to invite their participation in the study.

Dear families,

As children play, they often gravitate toward classroom items that move, turn, and roll. From wooden trains to fast toy cars, children enjoy exploring wheels and watching them go! We have noticed the children asking questions about wheels and showing interest in how wheels are used, how they move, and how they help people. Their ongoing curiosity about the different types of wheels has helped us realize that wheels would make a good study topic.

We need your help gathering a collection of wheel-related items to investigate. We will need many different types of wheels, items with wheels, and books and pictures related to wheels. Here is a list of suggested items, but you may also send in items that are not on the list. We will take good care of them so we can return them to you at the end of the study.

toy vehicles	scooters	pictures of wheels or items with wheels
plastic rotary molding dough cutters	skateboard	pictures of sports that use wheels, such as motor sports, inline skating, roller derby, wheelchair basketball, and cycling
pipe cleaners	roller skates	
spools	dollies	
lids	wheeled carts	
cardboard	gears	
casters	toy construction set with wooden or plastic spools, caps, cylindrical pieces, and connector sticks	items the children can use to make wheels and pulleys, e.g., pipe cleaners, spools, cardboard, lids, yarn, rope.
rolling pins		
wheels		
strollers	books that feature vehicles or other wheeled objects	
wheelchair		
tires		

As we study wheels, we will learn concepts and skills in language and literacy, math, science, social studies, the arts, and technology. We will also be using thinking skills to investigate, ask questions, solve problems, make predictions, and test our ideas.

What You Can Do at Home

Talk with your child about any wheels that you see around your home and neighborhood, such as car wheels, tractor wheels, rolling pins, and wheelbarrows. Create a list of the wheels you find and add to it when you are out in the community and discover a new type of wheel. This builds children's observation skills and helps them make connections between what they are learning at school and things in the community. Invite your child to play with toy cars and other toy vehicles. Ask questions about how they work: "How do the wheels move?" and "Why does the car have four wheels?"

At the end of the study, we will have a special event to show you what we have learned. Thank you for participating in our learning.