

## A New Path - Fresh Applications of Virtual Reality in Special Education

In early 2021, Spaulding Academy & Family Services applied for and received a technology grant from the Flutie Foundation for the purchase of Virtual Reality (VR) headsets. We have had successful implementations of ClassVR with a wide range of students, all of whom have differing needs - the results of virtual reality in special education thus far have been truly inspiring.

In particular, we've been working with a student who has limited mobility - this student craves movement and has a penchant for speed! In order to provide him access to activities that were previously inaccessible to him, we spent a day filming 360-degree real-life experiences. With this footage, we've put this student on a mountain bike on our trails - the same ones his peers are able to bike on. We've put him on our ropes course - the same one his peers use. We've put him on the ski slopes and many other places, and the look on his face says it all. We are excited to extend this option to all of our students.

### About The Authors:

The author, Charley Suter, is a state-licensed Digital Learning Specialist working at Spaulding Academy & Family Services, where he's been for the past 7 years. Prior to his time in education, he served as Knowledge Coordinator at the International Association of Privacy Professionals. He's a devoted educator, an advocate for equity and inclusion, a tech geek, a privacy proponent, and a lifelong guitar player!

Jen Benjamin, MS, OTR/L, has been an Occupational Therapist for over 20 years, and she has been at Spaulding for over 10 years, via Boothby Therapy Services. Jen loves how the field of OT constantly changes and expands! Jen's specialty is working with children who have challenges with sensory processing, and she is thrilled to add Virtual Reality to the ever-growing tool box of strategies for self-regulation.

To Learn More Visit: <https://www.classvr.com/fresh-applications-of-virtual-reality-in-special-education/>

## LEARNING



## Leprechaun Paper Plate Craft

### Materials

- Paper - green, black, yellow (construction or cardstock)
- Paper Plate
- Glue
- Scissors
- Orange paint
- black sharpie or marker

### Directions:

1. Start by turning your paper plate upside-down.
2. Paint the outside of the plate orange and let it dry.
3. Cut slits into the bottom of the plate for the Leprechaun's beard.
4. Make a hat out of the green, black and yellow paper.
5. Glue your Leprechaun's hat to the top of the paper plate
6. Add eyes, a nose and a smile with your sharpie or marker
7. OR cut out the middle of your paper plate and use as a Leprechaun mask

## FUN CRAFT



Ask Your Child: What makes you feel lucky?

Find more fun crafts visit:  
[www.Craftymorning.com](http://www.Craftymorning.com)

## Saint Patrick's Day Crinkle Cookies

### Ingredients

- Standard cake mix
- Green food coloring
- Mint Flavoring
- 2 Large Eggs
- Powdered sugar - 1 cup
- Corn starch - 1 tsp
- Butter - 6 Tbs, melted
- Parchment Paper

### Directions

1. Preheat oven to 375\*
2. Melt butter, allow to cool
3. In a small bowl, mix powdered sugar and corn starch
4. In a large bowl, mix together butter, cake mix and eggs
5. Add 10 drops of green food coloring (add more as desired)
6. Add 5 drops of mint flavoring and mix well
7. Form into 1 Tbs size balls
8. Roll the balls in the powdered sugar mix and coat well
9. Arrange on cookie sheet lined with parchment paper
10. Bake for 8 minutes
11. Allow to cool. Serve and ENJOY!!

## EASY RECIPE



Ask Your Child: What is your favorite thing to eat/drink with cookies?

To find more kids activities visit:  
[www.erecipecards.blogspot.com](http://www.erecipecards.blogspot.com)

## Positive Alternatives to Punishments

We often tend to associate discipline with punishment because we are used to thinking that the only way to correct negative behavior is to punish the child. This is not true!

In fact, studies show that punishments are inefficient in the long run and have several negative effects on kids. Instead, using gentle discipline methods is a great way to raise happy and confident kids!

1. Prevent challenging parenting moments. Although this is not really a discipline method, I can't emphasize more how important this is! A lot of difficult moments with our kids can be prevented. Prevention is far better (and easier) than dealing with tantrums or negative behavior.
2. Use time-in instead of time-out. Parents often use time-outs because they want to punish negative behaviors and teach children to calm down. The problem with time-outs is that they send the wrong message. Kids understand that they are not "wanted" when they misbehave and that they have no support in dealing with difficult feelings.
3. Set limits with empathy and respect. Gentle parenting doesn't mean that the child doesn't have to follow the rules or that the parent isn't in charge of setting the limits. The only difference is the way we set these limits. We must be firm about following the rules, but we also need to be empathetic.
4. Involve the child in finding a solution. Positive discipline states that negative behavior is the way kids tell us they need our support in dealing with powerful feelings. The way that we react makes the difference between making them feel worse or teaching them a powerful lesson.
5. Never decide anything out of anger. There are moments when we get angry, and we say or do things that we later regret. This is why we should never take any disciplinary decisions while we are still mad. If you're able to regain your calm, you will not let your emotions interfere with the way you discipline your kids. This will allow you to find gentle methods to deal with the situation and build a strong relationship with your child.

## PARENTING



Ask Your Child: Let's set some rules together?

To learn more visit:  
[www.playfulnotes.com](http://www.playfulnotes.com)