

Lithuania:

Strengthening Children's Mental Health During Covid 19 Quarantine

As a health-promoting educational institution, Marijampolė Kindergarten Rūta in Lithuania, even during Covid 19, helps parents to focus on the development of individual skills in strengthening children's mental health. Teachers Lina and Asta offer to start every day with exercising, football coach Živilė provides interesting exercises with a ball, art teacher Aušra provides great ideas for children's pieces of art, and music teacher Virginija encourages children to be in a good mood by playing, dancing and singing in their free time. Parents are encouraged to spend as much time outdoors as possible with their children because nature and education affect a person. Tasks for researching beetles are presented, children are taught to love and conserve nature and children's ecological concept is developed as well. During quarantine children of the group *Šarkiukai* and their parents were looking for beetles and observing their life in nature. They also have studied the habits of beetles. Life of ants caught the greatest interest. Children observed how worker ants keep pulling the blades of grass into the anthill. We were really satisfied with the ladybirds that children decorated with glued or painted dots. All of them were wonderful and exclusive.

Bees are hardworking and charming honey carriers. The children showed respect for the bees in their craftwork. Toilet paper tubes, coloured paper and even pieces of newspapers were used to make beautiful bees. Spiders hiding in the dark corners surprised us with their webs. The pictures were taken of the most beautiful ones hanging outside. We are happy with the works and videos sent by the parents.

One day was totally different and remembered us the pleasures of winter. The real joy was outside. The children were able to make snowmen and snow angels.

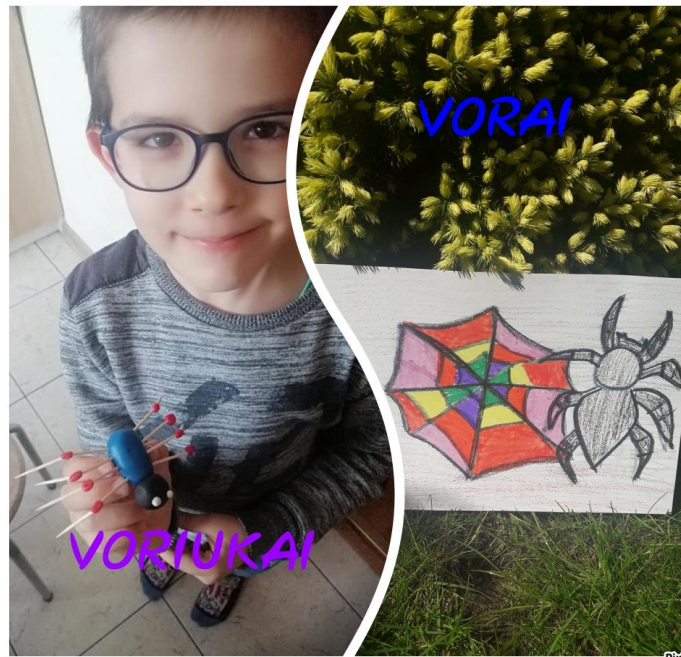
The children and their parents watched videos about climate change, nature conservation and showed interest in living green. While listening to the bear's tale of climate change, they realized the purpose of saving energy and its resources. In order to develop the ability to care for plants and to form a perception of the path from seed to plant, children grew plants in their balconies and gardens. They really enjoyed this activity.

Well, how about the creativity of the little ones in artistic activities. The children drew how they would save the earth and how they would live green. The ideas of the children and their creativity surprised us a lot.

Children's mental health is enhanced when they are active participants in educational process. We advise parents to involve children in household chores appropriate to their age and recommend holding family meetings where it is important to discuss house rules, opportunities to stay alone and ways to calm down.

Let us be attentive and united in protecting children's mental health! Only efforts of all of us will help to be mindful of children's mental health issues, needs and lack of necessary things.





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