**Why Kumihimo?**

* Kumihimo is a great option for children with a need for sensory input, to give them something to do (or fidget with) during a time in which they need to focus
* Teaches patience in waiting for a result, but gives the children something they can easily accomplish
* Provides children with an introduction to basic weaving techniques
* A great option for those children who are struggling with knitting, crocheting, or weaving

Verse

Rainbow colors one through seven

Place them all up in heaven

Leave the gap near your heart

Pull down the third, turn, restart

**Tonight’s Focus: Fill the Gap Hexagonal Disc**

Materials:

* 7 pieces of yarn, thread, twine, etc. (any color, though I have chosen to use rainbow colors)
* Octagonal Disk with eight slots (you can purchase these online or make your own from cardboard, old CD’s, etc.) Discs can be cardboard, foam, or wooden
* Clothespin or other weight (optional)

Instructions:

1. Tie the non-bobbin ends of the 8 threads together and place the knot down through the hole in the center of the disk. The side of the disk that contrasts most with your thread colors should be on top (in this case, white should be on top)
2. The empty slot stays close to your heart. You pick up the third one from the bottom and bring it down to the open slot. Turn (clockwise if right-handed, counter if left-handed) until new empty slot is down (close to your heart).
3. Continue this motion until your cord is the desired length!
4. To end, tie a knot at the end of the cord, and let your imagination run!

**Ideas for Cords\*\***

Belts, headbands, sandal straps, dress straps, guitar straps, camera straps, basket handles, woven bags, chair webbing, camp stools, luggage racks, shoe laces, eye glass cases, curtain tiebacks, key chains, clothing, clothing closures, decorative trim, fancy buttons, hat bands, neckties, wedding garters, crowns, bookmarkers, pillow trim, animal reins, animal collars, leashes, lamp shade trim, plant hangers, giftwrap ties, jump ropes, napkin rings, holiday decorations, necklaces, bracelets, earrings, reading glasses cord, hair ties, Chinese knots, blind pulls, and more!

\*\*You may need multiple completed cords to braid together to create some of these items!

**What is Kumihimo Braiding?**

By Lynnette de Sandoval del Valle de los Unicornios

Kumihimo is the Japanese word for braiding (kumi = to braid, himo = cord). It encompasses many types and shapes of braids and has been done in many different methods with the aid of many different tools. Traditionally Kumihimo is done with dyed silk threads, although current Kumihimo braiders use everything from silk thread to metal wire.

Braiding in Japan can be traced as far back as 7,500 BC. During the Middle Ages the rise of the Samurai warriors created a great need for Kumihimo, with 800-1,000 ft of braid (in 8 ft lengths) used for each suit of armor! The braids were also used for wrapping sword hilts, horse harnesses, tea ceremony accessories, obi ties, and more. They were braided in many different shapes, textures, designs, and widths

Today the most common method of working Kumihimo is on the marudai (maru = round, dai = stand), where the work of braiding is done on top, and the finished braid is weighted to descend through a center hole.

The handheld Kumihimo disks are a modern adaptation of the marudai that allows for portable braiding. Many Kumihimo patterns, including Maru (Round) Yatsu (8 strand) Kumi (Braid) are easily adapted to these disks.