

# Getting Ready for Kindergarten: What Parents Can Do

A GUIDE TO SUPPORT PARENTS AS THEIR CHILD'S FIRST TEACHER



## Oral Language & Vocabulary

- Talk with your child about daily routines and experiences.
- Read books with your child and talk about the story or information.
- Ask your child questions.
- Answer your child's questions.
- Encourage your child to speak in sentences.
- Encourage your child to play and talk with other children.
- Provide opportunities for your child to do and see new things. Go for walks in your neighborhood, visit the zoo, library, and other places of interest.
- Provide opportunities for your child to draw, dance, listen to music, and make music. Talk about it.
- Provide opportunities for your child to have hands-on experiences to do things in the world. For example: *touch objects, pet animals, observe bugs, help with cooking, smell and taste foods, watch cars and trucks move.* Talk about how objects look, smell, and feel.
- Ask your child to follow simple directions and encourage him/her to do many things independently. For example: *getting dressed, setting the table, preparing a snack.*



## Concepts About Print

As you read with your child:

- Read the title on the cover.
- Talk about the picture on the cover.
- Point to where the story starts and later where it ends.
- Let your child help turn the pages.
- When you start a new page, point to where the words of the story continue.
- Follow the words by moving your finger underneath the words.
- Encourage your child to move his/her finger underneath the words as you read.



## Phonemic Awareness

- Sing rhyming songs with your child.
- Read and recite nursery rhymes with your child. As you read, stop before a rhyming word and encourage your child to fill in the blank. For example: *Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall. Humpty Dumpty had a great \_\_\_\_\_.*
- Around your home, point to objects and say their names. For example: *rug.* Then ask your child to say as many words as he or she can say that rhyme. For example: *Ball, tall, mall, fall, wall.*
- Say three words such as *cat, dog, and sat* and ask your child which words rhyme.
- Say silly tongue twisters with your child. For example: *Peter piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.*
- Help your child make up and say silly sentences with lots of words that start with the same sound. For example: *Betty bought a big, blue balloon.*



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## Letter Identification



- Sing the *Alphabet Song* with your child.
- Play games using the alphabet. For example: *I spy something that begins with the letter M.*
- With your child sitting next to you, print the letters of your child's name on paper and say each letter as you write it.
- Help your child to spell and write his/her name. At first, he/she may use just a few letters. For example, *Jenny* might use the letters *JNY*.
- With your child, make a name sign for your child's room.
- Point out individual letters in signs, posters, food containers like cereal boxes, menus, posters, magazines.
- Read ABC books with your child.
- Give your child a page from a magazine. Circle a letter on the page and have him/her circle matching letters.
- Watch TV shows with your child, such as, "Between the Lions," "Blues Clues," and "Sesame Street" that feature letter learning activities for young children.

## Phonics

- Look at pictures or objects. Ask your child to say the sound the picture or object begins with. Have your child find another picture or object that begins with the same sound.
- As you read a story or poem, ask your child to listen for and say words that begin with the same sound. Then have him/her think of and say another word that begins with the same sound.
- Write letters on pieces of paper and put them in a paper bag. Have your child pull out a paper from the bag and say the name of the letter and the sound that it represents. Then have him/her say a word that begins with the same sound.
- Cut pictures from magazines or draw pictures to help your child make his/her own alphabet book.
- Let your child have fun writing the alphabet letters, his/her name, and stories. Let your child share his/her writing. Praise your child's effort to write.



## Word Recognition

- Place alphabet magnets on your refrigerator. Encourage your child to make simple words. For example: *cat, dog, mom, dad.*
- Read books with your child and point out common words. For example: *the, I, go, a, and, see, like, me, you.*



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