

Help Your Child Get Ready for Kindergarten: Tips from Teachers
A Presentation for the 23rd Annual CARE Parenting Conference
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Goal

Equip parents and caregivers with the knowledge and tools to prepare children for Kindergarten.

Top Ten Tips

- Developed with a Kindergarten Teacher
- Cover all early learning domain areas: Language and Literacy, Social, Emotional, Physical, Cognitive, Arts and Aesthetics
- Each tip focuses on specific guidelines toward fostering development in that area.
- Specific readiness skills will also be presented in this handout
- Tips are ordered 10 to 1

This handout and slideshow will be available at the end of the conference through CARE.

Handout Order of Information

- **Tips 10-1**, pages 1-23
- **Building Block Skills With Corresponding Tips**, pages 23-28
- **Helpful Entry Skills for Kindergarten**, page 28
- **Sample Kindergarten Program Overview**, page 29
- **Article: What Kindergarten Teachers Wish Parents Knew** page 31
- **Diagrams (Alphabet, Tripod Grasp) and Talking Tips** pages 33-39

Please know:

These tips are intended to give parents and caregivers specific information regarding how to foster or maximize learning opportunities for their children. We respect the fact that all children have their own individual learning profile and may respond to the various activities differently. The skills presented in this presentation and handout are intended to be a guide for parents/caregivers. It is not expected that children will have mastery of all readiness skills prior to Kindergarten. In the State of Michigan, children are eligible for Kindergarten if they turn five years old on or before September 1st of the year they are enrolling in school.

TIPS

TIP 10. Build A Strong Foundation for Learning (Physical Domain)

Rationale: The child's physiological needs must be met for both brain growth as well as to build endurance for a full day of academic learning. Kindergarten curriculum typically includes language arts, math, science, social studies along with a group lunch time and outside recess. Additionally, there are specials classes, such as gym, music, art, computer lab, and library.

Summary:

1. Know the importance of basic physical needs

- Sleep (10-13 hours per night for children 3-5 years, 11-14 hours for 1-2 year olds, and 12-16 hours for infants 4 to 12 months)
 - Sleep is necessary for physical and mental health, cell repair, attention span and ability to focus, behavior, learning ability (Source: American Academy of Sleep Medicine)
- Healthy nutrition with unhurried well balanced meals and snacks,
- Don't forget to drink water! Water is important for optimal brain function. Most children don't drink enough water. "Dehydration can affect concentration and intellectual performance. Water is necessary for transportation of nutrients around the body." (source: Brain Foods for Kids)
- Allow for down time and quiet time.

• Home Activities

• Healthy Meals

- **Eat the rainbow:** A fun and tasty way to make sure you are eating enough fruits and vegetables is to eat as many different colors as you can at each meal. For example, some carrots, blueberries, and red bell peppers are all different colors and are all good for your body. Next time you go grocery shopping, pick out the most colorful fruits and vegetables. How many can you find? (From the American Heart Association)
- Make Rainbow Fruit Kabobs <https://www.pinterest.com/explore/rainbow-fruit-kabobs/>
- Helpful Website about nutrition with advice, tips, and free printables <http://www.nourishinteractive.com/>
- www.nutrition.gov
- Read books about healthy eating (and books that can help picky eaters) Some titles include:
 - Eating the Alphabet: Fruits and Vegetable from A to Z by Lois Elhert
 - Gregory the Terrible Eater by Mitchell Sharmat,
 - I Will Never Eat a Tomato by Lauren Child,
 - How Did that Get in My Lunchbox by Chris Butterworth.
 - For Complete list go to:
<https://www.weareteachers.com/11-fantastically-fun-childrens-books-that-teach-healthy-eating-habits/>
- Other Resource: Brain Foods for Kids by Nicola Graimes

2. Have Home Expectations for routines, following adult guidance, directions, transitions, responsibility, and personal needs (Sources: Active Parenting: First Five Years by Michael Popkin, Ph.D, Love and Logic Magic for Early Childhood by Jim Fay and Charles Fay, Ph.D.)

Strategies to foster growth in these areas:

- Routines
 - Have a consistent well established home routine. A strong home routine helps children adjust to the school routine.
 - Doing the same things each day at approximately the same time and in the same order. This builds brain connections and promotes the child's sense of safety and security. It is Important to have routines for morning, meals, and bedtime, etc.
- Following Directions-Discipline focus. Discipline means to teach. In this tip, the focus is on following directions as discipline strategy. (*Following directions can also be a way to help your child's language comprehension skills. More on the Language Comprehension aspect of following directions in Tip 7.)
 - "When then" rule (from Active Parenting)
 - Good for getting children to start doing something.
 - Basic formula: Tell child that when he does what you want him to do, then he can do what he wants to do.
 - "When you clean up all of your legos, then we can get a snack."
 - "When you take your bath, then I can read you a story."
 - ACT Method (from Active Parenting)
 - Good for getting children to stop doing something.
 - Step One: "A" Accept Child's wishes or feelings. Telling child that it is okay to want or wish for something. Communicate to the child that you understand how they feel. (This does not mean that you give the child what he/she wants). "I know you wish you could stay up all night."
 - Step Two: "C" Communicate the rule. You communicate to the child that while you understand how she feels, you do not like how she acts or what she intends to do. Tell the child what to do. "Nighttime is for sleeping. You sleep at night, so you are ready to play tomorrow during the day."
 - Step Three: "T" Target a positive choice. Give you child something else she can do or choose. "I can read you a story so you will be ready to sleep. You can choose one of your favorite stories."

Other Strategies for helping children to stop an undesirable behavior and to promote an expected behavior. (Sources: Love and Logic Magic for Early Childhood by Jim Fay and Charles Fay, Ph.D., Conscious Discipline by Becky Bailey, Ph.D.)

Promote Expected Behaviors:

- **Use Enforceable Statements.** Enforceable statements are limits that can be enforced 100% of the time, because it is stated in way that the parent can control

the outcome. Say what you will do or what will happen instead of what the child should do. Unenforceable Statement--"Hurry Up." Enforceable-"The car is leaving when the timer goes ding."

- **Choices:** Give Choices between 2 acceptable alternatives. Time to wash hands. You can use warm water or cold water Only two choices at a time, both need to be ok with you, and only about matters that are truly appropriate for a child to choose.
- **State what you want the child to do,** "Pick up the truck off the floor." *State clearly in positive terms.* "So you do not fall over." *Provide logic by relating the consequence to safety or health concerns.*
- **Sequence events** for your child. "First A, then B." First we wash hands, then we can eat. *When then.

Stop Undesirable Behaviors:

- **"Say it Once" Set Limits by 3 L's ("Location, Location, Location!") Rule** Set a limit. Say it once and take action. If the child does not listen, change your location, the location of the child, or the location of the problem object.
- **Limits are accepted more willingly when they point out the function of the object.** "The chair is for sitting" instead of "Don't jump on the chair." "Bedtime is at 8:00pm instead of you have to go to bed at 8:00am."
- **Make Good Choices:** Teach children to behave responsibly by using the ACT method.
 - Choices and consequences-After using the ACT strategy if the child continues to misbehave, give a choice (option to behave) or consequence (logically related consequence) " You can either stop throwing the cards or you will have to stop playing the game." Give the choice one time and then take action!
 - Help your child develop impulse control by playing games like "Simon Says" which teach children to stop and think before acting.
- **Transitions**
 - Remember young children cannot tell time and they have a hard time stopping what they are doing. Give children time to so they are ready to stop their play.
 - Give Verbal reminders. "Time to go soon. You only have a few minutes to finish what you are doing." Wait three or four minutes."It's time to go. Please stop."
 - Use Visuals: Use a visual means to show children an amount of time. Can use Sand Timers, Wind Up Timers, Digital Timers. (Children's Countdown Timer search App Store). "When the timer goes... it will be time to" "I'm setting the timer for ... minutes, when it goes.... You will need to...."
- **Responsibility** (Source Love and Logic Magic for Early Childhood by Jim Fay and Charles Fay, Ph.D)

- Chores build responsibility and a Healthy Sense of Self
- Strategies to get children to do chores
 - As soon as your child can walk, start working together
 - Model doing your own chores in front of your children
 - Give choices about doing age appropriate chores
 - 2-3 year olds can put toys away, stack books on a shelf, throw trash away, fold washcloths, get diapers and wipes
 - 4-5 year olds can feed pets, wipe up spills, put away toys, straighten bedroom, water houseplants, set the table, prepare simple snacks, make the bed
- Managing personal needs

Give children opportunities so they can practice managing their own needs.

 - **Hygiene:** blow nose and dispose of tissue, wash hands efficiently, use the bathroom independently, learn to turn head or cough into an elbow, Sing Happy Birthday or count to 20 when washing hands.
 - **Self care:** dress self, put on and take off shoes and boots, zip and unzip coat and backpack, manipulate outerwear and accessories, take care of and keep track of belongings.
 - **Manage Food Packaging:** open up packages, wrappers, lunch boxes, etc.

Think about:

- Does your child have special medical or dietary needs that could impact eating lunch in a group setting?
- Family needs: will you need before or after school care? Find out what type of before/after school care your prospective school offers to families.
- Any potential logistical changes that require planning.

Resources:

Active Parenting: First Five Years by Michael Popkin, Ph.D. www.activeparenting.com

Love and Logic Magic for Early Childhood by Jim Fay and Charles Fay, Ph.D.

www.loveandlogic.com

Conscious Discipline by Becky Bailey, Ph.D.

Why is all of this important?

- The Child's Brain is Growing!
- Kindergarten is a full day of core subjects and learning! For example, see page 25 for information about a sample Kindergarten Program and daily schedule

TIP 9. Know the Importance of Understanding the Learning Process (Cognitive Domain)

Rationale: Understanding how young children learn and how your child learns can give parents valuable insights and can help the process of communicating with educators.

Summary:

1. Children use their whole body to learn as brain development is not complete. They need hands on experiences to form neural connections in the brain. This is important for fine motor development needed for using their hands and learning to draw and write.
2. Know your child's unique profile of interests, strengths, challenges, temperament, and sensory processing. Does your child crave experiences or shy away?
 - Think about your own temperament vs. your child's.
How are you different? How are you the same?
 - Activity level: How much activity or restlessness does the child demonstrate? What is your child's energy level?
 - Quality of Mood: What is the child's basic disposition? What are your child's feelings? Usually happy and pleasant or sometimes sad?
 - Approach/Withdrawal: How does the child respond to new experiences?
 - Rhythmicity: How regular are the child's eating, sleeping, and bowel habits?
 - Adaptability: How does the child adapt to transition and change with respect to activities, food, and clothing? Is the child flexible or inflexible?
 - Sensory Threshold: How does the child react to sensory stimuli such as noise, sounds, light, smells, taste, pain, weather, wet diapers. Seeks? Under Responds? Avoids?
 - Intensity of Reaction: How intense is the child's reaction to both positive and negative stimuli? Is the child loud and forceful with all emotions. What is your child's will-power?
 - Distractibility: How distracted is the child when he/she is upset?
 - Persistence: How long can the child remain focused on one thing, such as when he/she happily engaged in an activity?
 - Introvert/Extrovert: Does your child enjoy the company of others or does he/she prefer to do things by him/herself.
 - (Adapted from the work of Turecki and Tonner as cited in Conscious Discipline by Becky A. Bailey, Ph.D. pp. 49-50.)
 - For children who are slow to adapt and demonstrate higher intensity of emotions, talking about the change to kindergarten and having a well thought plan can ease the transition process.

Helpful Resource:

Conscious Discipline by Dr. Becky Bailey

How does your child learn or through which modality does your child learn best? Auditory? Visual? Kinesthetic? Source: Discover Your Child's Learning Style by Mariaemma Willis M.S. and Victoria Kindle Hodson, M.A.

Auditory Learners

Does your child:

- Like music
- Tune into sounds and noises
- Like to be read to
- Remembers what has been heard
- "Listens" to learn
- Talks to self when playing
- Prefers talk to motor activities

Children who are auditory learners absorb information best when they hear it through verbal instructions. Preschoolers who quickly learn a tune just from hearing their teacher sing it or follow directions to a "T" after being told once or twice are auditory learners. Auditory learners often have the ability to ascertain the true meaning of someone's words just by listening to audible signals such as change in tone or level of loudness. Encouraging auditory learners to participate in class discussions, ask questions, and repeat new information as they are learning it will help them grasp concepts more quickly.

Visual learners

Does your child

- Like picture books & puzzles
- Attracted to colors, shapes, and patterns
- Like to color and draw
- Remember what has been "seen"
- "Watches" to learn things
- Keeps things neat and clean
- Prefers table play to outside play

Visual learners operate best when observing someone doing an activity or demonstrating a new concept. Those preschoolers with a visual learning style will often be spotted leafing through a picture book, playing with puzzles or shapes, or drawing pictures to describe something. Visual learners rely on their

sense of sight to take in and understand information or concepts in the world around them. They often have a keen power of observation and will watch your facial expressions and lip movement as you discuss something with them. When learning to write letters, visual learners will pick up the concept quickest by watching their teachers demonstrate how to write each stroke.

Kinaesthetic/tactile learners

Does your child:

- Like running, climbing, jumping
- Need to touch everything
- Like playing with sand
- Remember what has been “done”
- “Mimics” to learn
- Doesn’t mind getting dirty
- Prefers outside play to table play.

Preschoolers who are physical learners will use their hands or bodies to make new discoveries about the world around them. The physical learning style, also known as “tactual-Kinesthetic learning,” relies on a sense of touch to grasp new concepts or information. Role-playing helps a physical learner practice skills and behaviors. It helps for physical learners to move around and experiment with new concepts. Physical learners love hands-on activities like cutting construction paper, coloring, or using beads or other objects when learning how to count. Sports activities are great for physical learners as it satisfies their need for movement.

Resource: <http://learningsuccessinstitute.com/>

Tip #8 Importance of Exercise and Unstructured Activity (Physical Domain)

Rationale: The Brain needs exercise to stimulate development. Unstructured activity (as opposed to organized sports and games) allows the child to explore and refine movements needed for brain growth and physical development. Moving also sets the foundation for a lifetime habit of physical fitness.

Summary: Plan and allow for opportunities for unstructured physical play such as local playgrounds, indoor playgrounds, and your own backyard! Children need unstructured physical play to develop the coordination of both sides of the body and to internalize directional concepts such as up, down, left, and right, priming the body for academic learning. Physical play also helps the child control and refine movement patterns such as running, hopping, dynamic and static balancing as well as axial movement).

Ideas:

- Visit the Playground:
 - Tactile panels promote manipulation and coordination
 - Swings and slides promote balance and coordination
 - Bridges and ramps promote locomotor skills
- Move-Jump, hop, skip, walk
- Play outside everyday
- Get into nature and your backyard

Can extend and build on this by playing simple games such as “Simon Says”

- Talk about positional/directional concepts such as up/ down, front,/back, over/ under, above/ below, right/, left, beside/ between, top/bottom, inside/outside, above/below, high/low, off/on, first/last, far/near, go/stop
 - Children’s Books that incorporate these concepts: We Are Going On A Bear Hunt by Helen Oxenbury, The Berenstain Bears Inside Outside Upside Down by Jan and Stan Berenstain, The Foot Book by Dr. Seuss.
- Talk about and identify basic body parts and then more specific ones such as wrist, heel, ankle and jaw

Resources/options in the community

- Belle Isle Nature Themed and Accessible Playground on Belle Isle in Detroit
<https://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/detroit/2016/10/20/belle-isle-opening-accessible-nature-themed-playground/92450966/>
- Local Indoor Playgrounds: Jungle Java www.junglejavaplay.com , Boogie Babies www.boogiebabies.net

Tip #7 Know the Importance of Talking with Your Child (Language Domain)

Rationale: Brain needs language to grow!

Summary: Talk and interact **with** your child as much as possible. Children require real life interactions to truly learn this skill. Teach the conventions of conversation (including eye contact, body language) as well as how we talk in different situations. (e.g. being quiet in the library, talking to elders). Practice asking and answering questions that children will be asked in school. **The point of this tip is about talking **with** children (where the adult takes an interactive role) as opposed to talking **to** children (adult takes a directive role to guide or inform).*

Resources: Thirty Million Words by Dr. Dana Suskind www.thirtymillionwords.org

Thirty Million Words Initiative 4 T's

- Tune in: Stop what you are doing and quiet your mind so you can attune to your child. Follow child's lead in terms of interests, engage and connect. Notice how eye contact, body language and tone of voice carry meaning. Help your child understand non verbal communication by drawing their attention to eye contact, body language and tone of voice and what meanings these parameters carry in conversations. ***This is the most nuanced "T." Parents need to observe what the child is doing and interpret the child's actions in order to attune to the child's interest.***
- Talk More: Talk with the child, not to the child. Use a rich and diverse vocabulary. Use more words, don't shy away from using big words, expand your child's vocabulary, be descriptive. Specific Strategies from TMW:

- Narration: Narrate what you are doing in front of child. Shows the relationship between a word and the act that pertains to it.
- "Take "it" away: Use nouns instead of pronouns since pronouns are more abstract.
- Use decontextualized language: Talk about things that are not in the "here and now." Academics involve decontextualized language.
- Expansion, extension, scaffolding: Expand child's language by restating what the child says with more specific language. Child: "Doggy sad." Adult: "Your doggy is sad."

More Strategies:

- Describe what you see, be precise, look up the meaning of words with your child.
- Compare and contrast items:
- Identify similarities and differences,
- Describe are at the lake and your child loves boats, label all of the specific boats you see...freighter, yacht, sailboat
- Play games.. "I Spy." "Simon Says" and "Guessing Games"
- Example: label specific vocabulary for your child. If you child is interested in boats, talk about all the different kinds of boats, e.g. Sailboats, Freighters, etc.
- When using "big words" explain their meaning.
- Take Turns: Have conversations, take turns, with babies and toddlers, this can be non-verbal.
 - Open ended questions invite thinking.
 - **Want to get the child to do the thinking.** "What do you think" questions "What do you think....," "Where do you think..." "How do you think..." "Why do you think..."
 - **It's not answer it's the reasoning.** Challenge your child to give reasons and express opinions.
 - Let your child form hypothesis and test them out.
 - Do a lot of wondering...act "dumb" and let your child explain
 - Want the child to do the thinking!

- Also, practice “Practice “formal” school language Practice asking and answering safety questions that children will be asked in Kindergarten. This can include reciting:
 - Full name: first and last
 - Birthdate
 - Address
 - Phone Number
- Language Comprehension: Strengthen your child’s language comprehension skills by playing games like Simon Says or giving him/her 2-3 step directions (use body parts or everyday objects). “Touch your ears, clap your hands, and pick up the pencil.” Take turns and let him/her give you directions to follow. Make it a game and make it fun!
- In Kindergarten, there will be “turn and talk” times where children converse and talk with a partner.
- ****See additional Talking Tips Handouts for talking at mealtime, bathtime, etc! (page**
- Turn off Technology and Talk:
 - Real life conversations and interactions over passive screen time. Screens limit the boundary of space. Children need to visually scan the 3-d world in order to develop eye muscles needed for tracking this is important for academics.
 - Make Technology interactive. Skype and Face Time are ways to use Technology interactively. Drawing pad or apps that require talking and interaction also use technology interactively. Can show your child how you use technology to access information (carefully! Of course)
 - Problems can arise when children become passive recipients to screens. Carefully monitor and limit passive screen time. Never allow screens, tablets, TVs, computers and video games in a child’s bedroom as they can interfere with healthy sleep or could risk exposure to the internet without adult supervision.
- However....Know that Children will interact with Technology in Kindergarten. Computer lab time is often part of the Kindergarten curriculum.
 - Computer Skills in KG include: learning to select items with a mouse, dragging items across the screen from one location to another, and finding letters in their name on the keyboard, using interactive whiteboards, iPads
 - Teach children how to use technology responsibly
 - Make it interactive!

Helpful Apps: Supplementary rather than as the main vehicle for teaching!! Remember: CHILDREN NEED REAL LIFE 3-D CONCRETE EXPERIENCES FOR BRAIN DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING!

- **Drawing Pads APPs can be great for promoting interaction. Have your child draw. Use a style to develop the tripod grasp. Also, your child can tell you what to draw. Have fun choosing colors, lines, etc.**
- ABC Mouse
- Moose Math by Duck, Duck Moose **Teaches:** Number sense, skip counting, shapes, addition, and subtraction
- Starfall ABCs **Teaches:** Letter recognition, phonics, and listening
- Thinking Time Pro Cognitive Skills for Early Learning **Teaches:** Attention, following directions, logic, and memory
- Toca Tea Party **Teaches:** Getting along with others, friendship building, and following directions
- Touch and Learn Emotions **Teaches:** Empathy, identifying emotions, and self-awareness

American Academy of Pediatrics(AAP) Guidelines for Digital Media Usage (2016)

- **For children younger than 18 months, avoid use of screen media other than video-chatting. Parents of children 18 to 24 months of age who want to introduce digital media should choose high-quality programming, and watch it with their children to help them understand what they're seeing.**
- **For children ages 2 to 5 years, limit screen use to 1 hour per day of high-quality programs. Parents should co-view media with children to help them understand what they are seeing and apply it to the world around them.**
- **For children ages 6 and older, place consistent limits on the time spent using media, and the types of media, and make sure media does not take the place of adequate sleep, physical activity and other behaviors essential to health.**
- **Designate media-free times together, such as dinner or driving, as well as media-free locations at home, such as bedrooms.**
- **Have ongoing communication about online citizenship and safety, including treating others with respect online and offline.**

Tip #6: Visit Neat Places (Arts and Aesthetics, Cognitive, Domain)

Rationale: Exposure to a variety of places builds the child's experiential base, fueling the interest and curiosity in the world. Later on when concepts are presented in school, a child will be able to make the connection between real life and the curriculum.

Summary: Use resources in the community as exciting venues for an adventure with your child! Discuss the experience with your child. Visit nature areas seasonally and discuss changes in the environment. This builds "STEAM" awareness or interests in Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math.

Nature-Zoos, Aquariums, Nature Centers, Petting Zoos, Parks, Cider Mills, Great Lakes, etc.
 Science and Arts-Museums, Science Centers
 Performing Arts-Plays, Music and Dance Performances, Shows, Theater

Local Public Library-Story Hour, regular visits to borrow books.

Fun Places in and near the Metro Detroit Area and Southeastern Michigan

- Detroit Zoo, Royal Oak
- Belle Isle Nature Zoo, Detroit
- Michigan Science Center, Detroit
- Greenfield Village and Henry Ford Museum, Dearborn
- Ann Arbor Hands on Museum, Ann Arbor
- Detroit Kid City, Southfield
- Red Oaks Nature Center, Madison Heights
- Wolcott Mill, Ray Township
- Area Apple Orchards and Cider Mills, Rochester Hills, Romeo, Franklin
- Toledo Zoo, Toledo, Ohio
- Michigan Sea Life Aquarium, Auburn Hills
- Legoland Discovery Center, Auburn
- Huron Clinton Metroparks

With Creativity and Imagination make any place a neat place!

- Grocery Store or Fruit Market-What's in season?
- What can you find in your backyard?
- Take a walk in the neighborhood -make a list beforehand and look for items, Have a scavenger hunt

Other idea:

Have a globe or post a map (state, country or world) on the wall. Talk about the places. Take turns asking questions about landmarks.

Other Resources:

<http://www.parents.com/fun/vacation/ideas/10-trips-to-take-before-your-kid-turns-10/>

Tip #5: Play! (Language, Social, Emotional, Cognitive, Physical, Aesthetic Domains)

Rationale: Play is the primary vehicle for developing the child's capacity for imagination, language, and abstract thought. The more thinking, imagination and creative processes the child uses, the better! Electronic toys can limit imagination and creativity, so plain items are best!

Role play and act out fun stories like "The Three Bears."

10 Great Play Items to foster imaginative thinking

1. Plain wooden boxes of various sizes, stacking toys
2. Dress up Clothes, Pretend Props (Themes: Kitchen play, tea set, tools, phone)
3. Play dough, Clay, Paper Mache
4. Legos-Large and small

5. Shape Sorters, nesting cups, ring-stacking toys
 6. Puzzles-Inset, Jigsaw, Floor
 7. Simple Board Games-Candy land, Chutes & Ladders, Hi Ho Cherry O, Card Games-Go Fish
 8. Figures with props Barn, Airport, Garage
 9. Manipulatives like a Domino set, Marble works, Magnetized tiles, building blocks, Lincoln logs, etc.
 10. Drawing and painting (crayons, chalk, water color paints, non-toxic marker, etc.)
- *Always have an age appropriate dictionary/pictionary handy for your and your child's reference. Look for these items, new or used, can find great items at garage sales and/or resale shops.

Great Thinking Games for Thinking Skills (Source Active Parenting: First Five Years by Michael Popkin, Ph.D.)

1. "I Spy"
2. "Who am I?"
3. 20 Questions
4. Freeze Tag
5. Hide and Seek
6. Hot or Cold
7. Talk about Trivia about animals, movies, books, or any topic your child enjoys
8. Imagine with your child, make up stories, jokes, songs, play charades
9. Play with math concepts, count, sort, and match objects. Ask "Which one is different?"
10. Have fun!!! The focus is on the interaction with your child and the encouragement of thinking skills.

Tip: Have a special "Brain" space/spot designated for your child's building projects (where these projects can stay up). As your child grows this space or table can be designated as a spot for doing jigsaw puzzles, crossword puzzles, mazes, brain teasers or any "creative project." etc.

Play Dough Recipe

- 1 cup sifted plain flour
- 2 Table Spoons Oil
- ¼. Cup salt
- 1 cup water
- 2 Teaspoons of cream of tartar
- Dissolve salt in boiling water
- Add to: flour, cream of tartar, and oil in mixing bowl
- Beat until combined
- Add food coloring, etc.
- When cool, knead until smooth

Optional: Can color with food coloring, tempera, kool-aid, jello, glitter, add spices for fun *Food coloring or tempera paint may stain

Specific Skills

- Make a ball, pancake and snake

- Do a 12 piece interlocking puzzle
- Plays make believe with objects
- Takes on Pretend roles and situations
- Takes turns with toys and simple board games

There are many fun ideas on Pinterest!

Tip #4 The Importance of Building a Healthy Sense of Self; Turn Frustration Conflict and Disappointment into Valuable Learning Opportunities (Social/Emotional)

Rationale: Contrary to popular belief, a healthy sense of self is not created from adult praise but rather from the child's ability to overcome obstacles. The focus of this tip is the following:

- to help parents and caregivers recognize that these moments are indeed valuable
- to provide strategies for supporting children in these times

Additionally, related to this tip are:

- Strategies for helping children make positive choices
- Strategies for supporting parents and caregivers

According to Love and Logic Authors, Jim and Charles Fay, In order to develop a healthy sense of self, children need to:

- Try some things that are challenging
- **Struggle!**
- Receive encouragement
- Experience effort related success
- Have adults who focus on their effort and not intelligence or other inherent qualities

Situations that can help foster growth in this area,

When something does not work out--

- Not always being first in line
- Losing a turn in a game *Practice this by playing board games and losing a turn or the game.
- Handling a friend who doesn't want to play
- Frustration when something does not work and how to ask for help
- Disappointment when plans change or when they realize something belongs to someone else
- Understanding and respecting others' feelings and property

Strategies: *Embrace these opportunities for growth! Build resilience and perseverance.*

- Talk about the situation after the fact.
- Label emotions. Discuss what child can do.
- Help child think.
- Read children's books about feelings (see list on next page).
- From Active Parenting: **ACT Strategy** (page 3)
- From *The Whole Brain Child* by Dr. Dan Siegel:
 - **"Connect and Redirect"** *When your child is upset connect first emotionally, right brain to right brain" Do this by demonstrating empathy in your facial expression and tone of voice. Then, once child is in control and receptive, use "left brain" logic and discipline.*
 - **"Name it to tame it"** *Help your child label the emotion and tell a story about it. The Whole Brain Child has many brain based strategies to help parents teach children how to cope with big emotions.*
- Mindfulness Techniques may optimize parents and caregivers ability to use these strategies. www.mindfulnessexercises.com

Effective Praise

Research demonstrates that Effective Praise encourages children to take risks. Taking risks is necessary for learning! Judgements such as "Great Job." "I like ..." encourage the child to please others.

Formula for effective praise:

"You+ description of what child is doing."

Can add a tag statement that describes a value.

"You drew with orange and yellow. That was creative."

"You picked up your toys off the floor. That was helpful."

Other tags include, "that was kind, that was honest"

--from Conscious Discipline by B.Bailey, Ph.D.

Children's Books about Feelings

When Sophie Gets Angry by Molly Bang

Today I Feel Silly by Jamie Lee Curtis

Glad Monster, Sad Monster by Ed Emberley

The Way I Feel by Janan Cain

Hands Are Not For Hitting by Martine Agassi

My Many Colored Days by Dr. Seuss

Lots of Feelings by Shelley Rotner

Mouse Was Mad by Linda Urban

Sometimes I'm Bombaloo by Rachel Vail

Feelings by Alike

Resources:

Active Parenting First Five Years by Michael Popkin, Ph.D.

Conscious Discipline by Becky Bailey, Ph.D.

Parenting from the Inside out by Dan Siegel, M.D. and Mary Hartzell, M.Ed.

The Whole Brain Child by Dan Siegel, M.D. and Tina Payne Bryson, Ph.D.

Love and Logic Magic for Early Childhood by Jim Fay and Charles Fay PhD.

Great Kids by Stanley Greenspan, M.D.

Tip #3 Sing, Dance and Move to Music

Rationale: Singing songs and rhymes as well as moving to a strong/steady beat facilitates the necessary pre-reading skills of phonological and phonemic awareness (important predictors of reading success). It does NOT matter what kind of voice you have! Sing!

Summary:

Sing, say, or read Nursery Rhymes. Talk about Rhyming words. Read Dr. Seuss Books. Put on music and dance. Move to the beat. March to music!

Some Great Dr. Seuss Books for Preschoolers

The Foot Book

There's a Wocket in My Pocket

Dr. Seuss ABCs

Mr. Brown Can Moo, Can You?

Green Eggs and Ham

10 Great Songs and Rhymes

- *Humpty Dumpty*
- *Old MacDonald*
- *Itsy Bitsy Spider*
- *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star*
- *One Two Buckle My Shoe*
- *Old MacDonald*
- *Row Row Row Your Boat*
- *Pop Goes the Weasel*
- *Hey Diddle Diddle*
- *Jack and Jill*

Resources:

- www.nurseryrhymes.org
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dUeMTbCh1d0>
- www.moothergooseclub.com
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dUeMTbCh1d0>
- Or google any nursery rhyme
- Other Music: www.merrymusicmaker.com Kids on the Move has many fun songs preschoolers enjoy!
- www.gregandsteve.com Great Music for Kids

Tip # 2 The importance of providing Drawing, Writing and Fine Motor Opportunities for your child.

Rationale: These experiences will build a child's capacity for drawing and writing.

Summary: Provide opportunities for development of fine motor, drawing and writing skills at home. Show the importance of writing as a process by modeling writing for your child. Show them how you make lists or how you write down information. Have an in home writing/craft center stocked with unlined paper, crayons, glue, markers. Encourage all efforts of drawing and writing!

Important for Kindergarten:

Demonstrate proper mechanics, letter formation, and usage.

- Mature Tripod Grasp *Use small pieces of crayon or chalk to help form a tripod **Small pieces or broken crayons and chalk can be a choking hazard for children under 3 years of age.
- Letter Formation -see chart Top to Bottom, left to right
- Name Formation-Title Case , but children will do all capitals
- Capitals are easier to form
- Fiskar Scissors
- Basic Shapes needed for Writing the Letters of the Alphabet-see Get Set for School page

Specific Skills:

- Write first name--if child can do easily then progress to working on the last name
- Hold a pencil with a tripod grasp
- Stack 10 one inch cube blocks
- Copy lines and shapes

- Use scissors to cut line and shapes
- String Beads
- Uses a variety of materials for tactile exploration
- Practice drawing self portraits. Learning Without Tears has materials and resources.

Fine Motor Strengthening Activities by Lisa Newbold, OTR/L

1. Put shaving cream on a window or the walls of the bathtub and allow your child to play in it. Include use of a paint brush or Q-tip to make designs in the shaving cream. Encourage drawing of shapes such as vertical lines, horizontal lines, circles, crosses and squares.
2. Find some crayons from around your house. Have your child peel the paper off the crayons and break them in half. Using smaller crayons will help promote a tripod (3 finger) grasp.
3. Put rubber bands around cans you may have in your pantry.
4. Connect paperclips to make a chain.
5. Use children scissors to trim the grass, leaves, strips of paper or straws into small pieces
6. Rip and crumble small pieces of tissue paper using fingertips. Then glue on paper to make a collage.
7. Use a toy hammer to hammer golf tees into a pumpkin. Once a variety of golf tees are secured in the pumpkin, stretch rubber bands around the golf tees.
8. Pick up small items such as cheerios/buttons/goldfish/coins/dry beans from the table or floor and place in the opening of a small bottle.
9. Use tweezers to pick up cotton balls and release into a designated container
10. Use salad tongs to pick up and release small stuffed animals or toys and place into a designated location
11. Give your child a medicine dropper and/or a bulb syringe to play with in the bath. Show them how to retrieve and squirt water with these tools.
12. Secure paper clips on the edge of a folder/box/envelope
13. Rip and crumple newspaper into balls and throw to a target
14. Use a rolling pin to flatten play dough. Use a cup or cookie cutters to make play dough cookies. Can also do this activity with salt dough to make ornaments or real cookie dough.
15. Encourage your child to help you cook in the kitchen. Opening various packages, dumping, pouring and stirring are all great for strengthening fine motor skills.
16. Practice unfastening/fastening buttons/zippers/snaps. Place practice item in front of your child and encourage them to unfasten these items to begin, as this will be easier for them. Use items with large fasteners to start (for example, 1-2" coat buttons over ½ inch shirt buttons).
17. Blow through a straw to move a cotton ball across a table.

18. Give your child a spray bottle filled with water and a cloth to help clean the table after meals.
19. Hide buttons/coins/small toys in play dough and have your child find them.
20. Pick up and place coins in a piggy bank slot.
21. Twist to take nuts on and off bolts. Larger will be easier to begin with. Can do this with plastic toy nuts/bolts or real ones if you feel comfortable.
22. Secure clothespins and/or chip clips to the side of a book, folder, popsicle sticks or cardboard box
23. Dig dirt from the yard or a sandbox using a spoon/shovel and dump into a bowl/bucket/cup. Can plant flower seeds with your child during this activity if you wish.
24. Use a medicine dropper and a spray bottle to water seeds/plant/flowers around your house or yard
25. Use small pieces of chalk to draw on the cement/easel. Practice drawing vertical lines, horizontal lines, circles, crosses and squares. Practice tracing or printing the upper case letters in first name. Draw a person with your child, encouraging a head, body, arms, legs, etc.
26. Give your child bottles, packages and containers of ingredients that are spoiled/almost gone/you no longer like from your refrigerator or pantry and allow your child to open, dump and stir to create a concoction (not intended to be consumed!).
27. Thread pipe cleaner through button holes
28. Dump salt or sugar on a cookie sheet and encourage your child to draw in it using his or her index finger or a Q-tip.
29. Fill a Ziplock baggie with soap or gel and some food coloring. Let all the air out and seal it tightly. Use tape for added security. Let your child draw shapes and letters on the bag while it is flat on a table.
30. Peel and stick stickers on a piece of paper.
31. Encourage your child to place pipe cleaner in the holes of your strainer.
32. Place a toy into a container of water and freeze. Once toy is frozen inside a cube of ice, use play tools or a spoon to chip the ice away and retrieve the toy. Protective eyewear might be necessary.
33. Spread baking soda on a plate. Use a medicine dropper to retrieve and squirt white vinegar (can add food coloring if you desire) onto the plate of baking soda and watch it bubble!
34. Take tweezers outside and try to catch bugs and place in a bottle.
35. Play keep it up with a balloon. Can use hands, a fly swatter or a tennis racquet to hit the balloon.
36. Push straws into playdough so they stand upright and thread tubular pasta onto the straws. Thread dry cereal or large beads onto pipe cleaners to make jewelry.

37. Push golf tees into the ground and try balancing small balls such as marbles on top of the tees.

Helpful Resources: Learning Without Tears www.lwtears.com

Tip # 1 Read

Rationale: Reading develops many skills. Reading books provides more variety of language than spoken language. Model reading. Read signs and logos in your environment. You never can read a story too many times!

Specific Skills

- Show your child how to handle a book
- Talk about the parts of a book-cover, title, author, etc.
- Talk about the characters, plot and setting
- Use repeated readings to focus on different aspects of a book or story
- Discuss stories after reading
- Look for and read signs and logos in your environment
- Have a calendar for your child. Write special days on it and read it with your child.

Mrs. DeVoght's Favorite Books!

- Stand Tall, Molly Lou Melon by Patty Levell
- How Much Is That Doggie in the Window by Iza Trapani
- Come Rhyme With Me by Hans Wilhelm
- Goodnight Moon by Margaret Wise Brown
- The Kid Who Invented the Popsicle by Don Wulffson
- Click, Clack, Moo, Cows That Type by Doreen Cronin
- The Runaway Bunny by Margaret Wise Brown
- The True Story of the Three Little Pigs by Jon Scieszka
- My Schools a Zoo! by Stu Smith
- Charlie the Caterpillar by Dom Deluise
- Over in the Meadow: An Old Nursery Counting Rhyme by Paul Galdone
- The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein
- Are You My Mother? By P. D. Eastman

Resource: www.readingfoundation.org

Putting it all together--combining all of the tips

Learn Everyday!

- Helpful Resource: VROOM APP Turn everyday moments into brain building moments. Visit Vroom Website. www.joinvroom.org
- See routines in a different way; turn the mundane into meaningful by seizing moments for learning during everyday routines
- Always know that spending time and enjoying an activity with your child is extremely valuable as you incorporate many skills without even realizing it!
- Building Blocks Activities Referenced with Ten Tips See Below
- B.E.S.T. Way to Teach Skills from Active Parenting: First Five Years by Michael Popkin, Ph.D.
 - (I'm going to teach you how to)
 - B-Break skill into Baby Steps (Here's the first step... second step.)
 - E-Explain and show how to do it (This is how you ...demonstrate)
 - S-Stand by to help while the child tries (Watch.)
 - T-Tell them what they are doing right (You're doing. ...That is!)

Effective Praise

Research demonstrates that Effective Praise encourages children to take risks. Taking risks is necessary for learning! Judgements such as "Great Job." "I like ..." encourage the child to please others.

Formula for effective praise:

"You+ description of what child is doing."

Can add a tag statement that describes a value.

"You drew with orange and yellow. That was creative."

"You picked up your toys off the floor. That was helpful."

Other tags include, "that was kind, that was honest"

--from Conscious Discipline by B.Bailey, Ph.D.

Logistics

- Register for Kindergarten now! Contact the School, School District's Website to begin the enrollment process! In the State of Michigan, a child must be 5 years old by September 1 of the school year of enrollment in order to be eligible for Kindergarten. There is an option of a waiver if a child turns 5 between September 1 and December 1 of the year he/she is enrolling in school. Careful consideration must be given to this option.
- Typical Documentation Needed: Original Birth Certificate, Health and Immunization Forms,

- Proof of Vision Screening, Residency Verification for public school districts
- Find out important upcoming dates for prospective Kindergarteners and attend all events, meetings, etc. Most districts may do a “Snapshot” assessment of incoming Kindergarteners. The purpose of this assessment is to design instruction to appropriately meet student needs for learning and to help parents know what to work on during the summer prior to Kindergarten.

As you get Closer... Summer Months

- **Read Books about Kindergarten**
 - Berenstain Bears Go To School by Stan and Jan Berenstain
 - Kindergarten Rocks! By Katie Davis
 - Look Out Kindergarten, Here I Come! By Nancy Carlson
 - Making Friends by Fred Rogers
 - My Kindergarten book by Angele S. Pass
 - Miss Kindergarten Gets Ready for Kindergarten by Joseph Slate
 - When You Go to Kindergarten by James Howe.
 - The Kissing Hand by Audrey Penn
- Think about separation: Have a plan if you anticipate separation difficulty.
- Visit the school and grounds. Become familiar and talk about.
- If possible connect with classmates/families of classmates.
- Role Play school; Practice Language and formalities, sitting still
- Adjust bedtimes and wake up times so your family is ready for the school schedule. Do early (July/August)
- Take advantage of summer programs--Kindergarten Readiness and Community Safety Workshops *Usually notices for such programs come out in the spring.
- Fun idea: Start a Kindergarten Year Scrapbook

Concerns about child's Readiness for Kindergarten

- Parent Decision
- Talk with educators (child's current preschool teacher and/or staff at the school where you intend to send your child)
- Know that children grow and change over the summer
- Investigate options such as Young Fives, Transitional Programs, etc. Know age requirements for these programs.

Building Blocks or Readiness Skills with Corresponding Tips and Ideas

Ideal Readiness Skills or focus areas to help parents prepare their child for Kindergarten. This is NOT intended to imply that all children must have Mastery of each and every skill!!!

From Getting Ready for Kindergarten: Tips from Teacher For What Your Child Really Needs to Know
by Becky Mansfield and Jenae Jacobson

*www.yourmodernfamily.com for more ideas www.icanteachmychild.com

Building Block Skill	Tip #	Additional Info, thoughts, etc.
1. Shows eagerness and curiosity as a learner	#6	Model your own excitement about something neat!
2. Persists in a task even when faced with a challenge.	#4	Can the child stick to a task? Work on challenging problems together. Model how you work through a difficult task..
3. Follow 2-3 Step Directions	#7	Start with one step and build to three steps over the course of weeks or months..
4. Transitions from one activity to the next with ease.	#10, #4	How does your child transition? If you ask, can he/she stop one activity and do what you ask?
5. Demonstrates respect for other children and their property	#4	Teach your child how items belong to others.
6. Use word to resolve conflict.	#4	Talk through situations with your child. Talk before and after these events happen.
7. Takes turns with toys and games	#5	Start by passing items back and forth. Play Tic-Tac-Toe, Guess Which Hand, Memory, Monopoly Jr., Teach your child to wait and be patient.
8. Sit Still for at least 5-10 minutes	#10	Work on by having child sit through plays, performances, church, etc. work up to 15 minutes.
9. Asks an adult for help	#4	Teach child how to ask for help. Model this by showing how you ask for help in situations.
10. Use the restroom independently	#10	Practice using unfamiliar bathrooms. Teach the need for privacy. Teach children about the need to go without waiting too long. Practice with buttons, zippers, belts and fasteners.
11. Washes hands efficiently	#10	Teach how to get a squirt of soap, use warm water if possible, sing ABC song 2x, or Happy Birthday or count to 20.

12. Identify basic body parts	#10, #8	Talk about specific body parts, like wrist, ankle, jaw, chin, etc. Play Simon Says, Sing the Hokey Pokey, and Head and Shoulders
13 Puts on and fastens clothes and shoes	#13	Practice putting on coat by him/herself, dressing self, putting on shoes, using fasteners, etc.
14. Identifies name, phone number and address	#7	Tip: Hang information up around the house on the frig, by child's bed. Do one thing at a time.
15. Recite Birthday	#7	Practice *
16. Writes first and last name	#2	Write name in sand, with chalk, with a cotton swab, salt/sugar. First letter capital. Teach how to write name on a line, such as Name: _____
17. Identifies Shapes	#1	Helpful for child to know basic shapes-circle, square, rectangle, triangle and then hexagon, oval, and diamond. Look for these shapes around the house, sort cereal, find foods that reinforce shapes, look for signs in the environment with different shapes
18. Sorts objects by size	#7	Play with measuring cups and show how the smaller ones fit into larger ones, put toys in order
19. Recognizes simple patterns and duplicates them	#10	Home routine can be a pattern, look for patterns in the environment, make a bracelet and let your child put the colors into a pattern; pink, green, etc.

Building Block Skill	Tip	Additional Thoughts, Info, etc.
20. Demonstrates positional/directional concepts	#8	Point out these concepts Say these words when you give directions, Have a scavenger hunt. Gather items (pick a theme like "round Things" and talk about where they came from. "The rock came from outside. It was underneath the tree, on the ground."
21. Shows understanding of and uses comparative words	#7	Compare toys such as dolls, blocks, cars, etc. to talk about which ones are big and little.
22. Identifies numeral 0-10.	#5	Work on one number at a time. Cut numbers out of sandpaper and have your child trace it. Look for numbers in the environment.

23. Rote counts to 20.	#5	Stack blocks and count them. Count steps as you walk up the stairs. Count as many things as you can.
24. Demonstrates an understanding of one-to-one correspondence by counting up to 10 objects.	#5	Use empty cans or containers and put something in each one. Draw numbered boxes on a piece of paper and let your child add the corresponding number of snacks to each box.
25. Listens with interest to stories read aloud	#1	Expose children to five main genres: realistic fiction, fantasy, alphabet books, song books, and nonfiction. Let child pick out books he/she is passionate about. Want to foster a lifelong love of reading!
26. Familiar with Books	#1	Model/teach print awareness, how books are read, top to bottom, left to right, talk about the cover, title/copyright pages, first page, turning pages, punctuation, caring for books.
27. Recalls Information from a Story	#7, #1	Discuss the characters and events in the story or books, talk about the beginning, middle, end
28. Recites and sings the alphabet	#3	Sing the ABCs to various tunes such as the traditional "Twinkle, Twinkle" but also "Mary Had a Little Lamb." tune. Point to the letters as you sing, use capitals, lowercase and both.
29. Identifies Uppercase and lowercase letters and their sounds	#1	Start with looking for letters in the environment (signs, menus, letters), Start with the letters in the child's name. Emphasize the sounds that each letter makes. Trace letters in shaving cream ** for more ideas
30. Match uppercase letters to lowercase letters	#1	Use capital and lowercase magnetic letters. Print captials on a long stip. Put Lowercase letters on individual clothespins and match.
31. Recognizes Rhyming Words	#3	Read rhyming (Dr. Seuss) and Song books. Talk about how rhyming words sound alike. When driving the car, pick out objects you see out the window and invite your child to think of a word that rhymes with the word you have choosen.

32. Isolates individual sounds within a word	#3	Say one syllable words very slowly and help child hear all of the sounds (NOT letters) **
33. Stacks one inch blocks	#2	Practice! Make tall towers, count the blocks.
34. String Beads	#2	Use lacing beads, Can use penne pasta, dye it with food coloring to make patterned necklaces
35. Complete 12 piece interlocking puzzle	#5	If your child is not into puzzles, use puzzles with his/her favorite character to spark interest. Talk about turning, rotating, and flipping pieces to make them fit.
36. Make a pancake, ball, and snake from playdough.	#5	Can also use alphabet stamps with playdough.
37. Hold a crayon, marker, and pencil correctly.	#2	See LWT sheet. Use small pieces of crayon or chalk to help fingers form a tripod.
38. Copy lines and shapes	#2	Top to bottom, vertical line, horizontal line, circle, cross, square, triangle
39. Uses scissors to cut lines and shapes	#2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have your child tear old newspapers and catalogs 2. Cut playdough 3. Cut straws 4. Snip, fringe, straight lines, zig zag lines. 5. Curved lines and circles (most difficult) <p>***www.pre-kpages.com/tips-for-teaching-scissor-cutting-skills/</p> <p>Cut old scraps, practice, practice, practice!</p>
40. Identifies 10 Basic colors-red, yellow, blue, green, orange, purple, black, white, brown, pink	#5	Talk about colors everywhere. Play Candyland.
Bulding Block skill	Tip	Additonal Information
41. Messy Play	#9, #2	Give child material such as glue, glitter, paper and let him/her create. Paint with cotton balls. *
42. Plays make believe	#5	Read real vs. fantasy books. Talk about the differences.
43. Takes on Pretend Roles	#5	Role play with your child. Pretend scenarios

		include “Doctor,” “Veterinarian,” “Teacher,” etc.
44. Asks questions about his/her environment	#5	Child’s ability to form questions about the environment such as “Why do…” is the basis for the scientific process. Channel your child’s curiosity. Resist giving your child the answer. Let him/her test out a hypothesis. Provide a journal for your child to draw a picture about his/her “projects.”
45. Demonstrate understanding of Cause and Effect	#5, #6	Try some fun science experiments, like mixing baking soda and vinegar, and yeast in dough.
46. Identifies similarities and differences in a group of objects	#5	Show your child a group of objects, such as a knife, fork, spoon, and block. Ask “Which does not belong?” Why? More ideas for exploring: Living/Non-Living Things Classes of Animals (Mammals, fish, reptiles) Liquids, Solids, and Gases Planets and Stars Man-Made vs. Nature Made Things

Helpful Language Arts KG Entry Skills	Helpful Math KG Entry Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say and Sing Nursery Rhymes. • Identify colors. • Hold pencil or crayon using correct grip. • Write name using correct form—Paul. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify numerals to 10. • Count to 20. • Count up to 10 objects with 1 to 1 correspondence. • Recognize more, less, same.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sing alphabet song and identify 75% of upper and lower letters. • Express self. Have extensive vocabulary. • Listen to and retell a story. • Understand that words we speak can be written in a list, on a card, in a book. • Express self in writing by drawing, writing, or writing. • Cut on a line with scissors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know shapes: circle, square, triangle, rectangle, hexagon, oval, and diamond. • Compare 2 items. • Compare measurements: size, weight • Sort objects by 1 characteristic.
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Sample Kindergarten Program Overview

This is intended to give a generic overview of the types of activities in a Kindergarten Day. Please consult with your intended school/district for specific information regarding your child's Kindergarten experience.

(The following information is courtesy of the Grosse Pointe Public School System's website.)

Kindergarten Core Curriculum

- Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, Technology, Health
- Social Skills, Learning Skills, Fine Motor Skills
- Specials Classes-Physical Education, Music, Art, Library, Computer Lab

Additional Special Activities

- Assemblies, Concerts, Field Trips, Field Day, Parties

Kindergarten Social Skills

- Caring for myself, sharing with others, taking turns, being respectful, listening to others

Learning Skills

- Making good choices, independence, being responsible, listening and following directions

Fine Motor Skills

- Cutting, gluing, drawing, coloring, writing
- Using correct pencil grip and letter/number formations

Language Arts

- Speaking, writing, reading
- Making Meaning
- Readers/Writers Workshop

Math

- Numbers (formations, counting), Operations (adding, subtracting), Patterns, Shapes, Classification (graphing, sorting)

Social Studies

- Me and My World

Science

- Properties, Water, Animals

Health

- My Five Senses, Community, Hygiene, Safety

SAMPLE MORNING Routine

- Arrival
 - Coat and Backpack Check
 - Lunch Choice
- Opening Circle
 - Calendar/Math
 - Class Meeting-Plan for the Day
 - Skill Introduction
- Language Arts Block

- Special Classes (Music, P.E., etc.)
- Centers
 - Small Group Instruction
- Morning Closing Circle
 - Story
 - Review/reflection
 - Music and Movement

LUNCH and RECESS

SAMPLE AFTERNOON Routine

- Read and Rest (as needed)
 - Teacher Instruction/Differentiated Groups
 - Individual Assessment/Reinforcement
- Math
- Science/Social Studies
- Computer Lab
- Enrichment-Fine Motor Skills
- Self Selected Learning Time
 - Differentiated Groups
 - Individual Assessment/Reinforcement
- Clean Up
- Closing Circle

Many school districts offer a “Kindergarten” PreK Snapshot Assessment to help design instruction to meet student needs and to help parents know what skills to work on over the summer prior to Kindergarten. Typical items that may be assessed can include:

- Shapes
- Colors
- Letters Names
- Letter Sounds
- Numbers
- Counting
- Ability to write name

What Kindergarten Teachers Wish Parents Knew

Get inside tips on how to make the most of school.

(FROM SCHOLASTIC MAGAZINE)



LEARNING BENEFITS

Kindergarten is an exciting and critical time in your child's development and growth. You can play an important role in this wonderful journey. Here's what kindergarten teachers want parents to know:

1. Your job isn't over when you drop your little one off at school; it has only just begun. Your child's teacher wants to be your partner. **Keep her informed** about what goes on at home that might affect your child's behavior or

academic performance. Share how what she does at school affects your child at home and do so in a way that is **considerate of her time**.

2. This is not your grandfather's kindergarten. Sadly, much of what happens in kindergarten is driven by high standards and preparation for **standardized tests**. The expectations of what children need to know when they enter kindergarten are closer to what used to be expected in 1st grade. To boost your child's academic skills:

- Talk with her about what interests her.
- Encourage her to be curious and ask questions.
- Point out letters and numbers when you see them in books and around town.
- Support her in solving everyday problems.

3. The more self-control your child has, the more successful he will be in school. Children need practice in deciding how and when to express their feelings and needs, and when and if to act on impulses. Help him develop and practice these skills at home before he tests them at school, where the consequences are a loss of learning for him and for others.

4. It's okay to make yourself known. Come in. Look around. Peruse the textbooks and materials. Knowledge is power. When you know about the subjects your child is studying, you will be able to help her better and have a common understanding for discussion. **Volunteering** is a wonderful way to learn about what goes on at school and to show your child how much you care about what she is doing.

5. Your child needs lots of opportunities for play outside of school. Play is the way in which he learns about himself and the people and world around him. But more often than not, play has been squeezed out of the school day. Playing both alone and in small groups helps facilitate learning and allows your child to practice skills and concepts.

6. Reading to your child once a day is not enough. Try to read together at least three times a day. Books are the gateway to building vocabulary, learning about print, and developing listening and **early literacy skills**. When you read, talk about the book. Discuss the characters and setting, make predictions, and create new endings. Point out letters and words in the text, and encourage him to recognize rhyming sounds and words and to identify beginning and ending sounds.

7. Writing exploration at home is critical. Your child needs to have **opportunities** to use pencils, crayons, markers, colored pencils, and other writing instruments as she attempts to **express herself** in written form. She begins with scribbles and lines, moves on to letters and her name, and then to words and sentences.

8. Homework is an opportunity for talking, sharing, and listening. Teachers give homework to extend the learning of the classroom. It is a chance for you to find out what your child is studying and how well he is grasping the skills and concepts being taught at school. Talk with your child about his homework. It shows him that you care and value what he does at school.

9. Television and video games use up valuable playtime. Limit screen time. The hours spent with these electronic devices could otherwise be spent talking, reading, or actively learning through play.

10. First-hand experiences are another teacher for your child. Take her to museums, the zoo, the aquarium, the library, parks, arts performances, and geographic locations such as the mountains, **beach**, forests, and deserts. And do it often. She'll grasp concepts and skills better if she has experiences with the real thing.

Diagrams

Capitals, Numbers, and Lowercase Letters



** Please try these tips at home!!*

Talking During Mealtime

by Anthony B. DeFec, Ph.D.; Diann D. Grimm, M.A., C.C.C., Ed.S.;
and Patricia A. Paige, M.S., C.C.C.

In many households, the most social event of the day is mealtime. With family members talking together, your child is given a fun opportunity to learn and use language. At mealtime, your child can practice listening to others, describing events, and sharing feelings and information. Here are some tips to make the most out of "table talk"!

What's special about mealtime?

The verbal give-and-take that occurs at the table is an ideal setting for a child to learn the rules of conversation. These rules involve what to say, how to say it, and when to say it. Other language skills develop at mealtime. "Gimme potatoes" gradually becomes "Please pass the potatoes." The use of polite language forms can be practiced while your child learns table manners. This is a first step toward the later ability to use appropriate language in different social situations. You can make the most of the daily mealtime routines to stimulate language development.

Mealtime Concepts

Language is based on ideas and experiences. Through interaction with their world, children learn meaning. Here are some ideas or concepts that are a natural part of the mealtime routine. Help your child learn these concepts by talking about them at mealtime.

Nouns:

Names of food and food groups, dishes, utensils, furniture, napkin, placemat, tablecloth, etc.

Actions:

Eat, drink, taste, chew, swallow, cut, pour.

Opposites:

Hot/cold, sweet/sour, more/less, empty/full, all/none, half/whole, a little/a lot, yummy/yucky, raw/cooked, liquid/solid, etc.

Adjectives:

Colors and shapes of foods; crunchy, mushy, soupy, baked, fried, mashed, salty, messy, hungry, thirsty, full, all gone, more, etc.

Location:

On the table, next to the plate, in the bowl, out of your chair, under the table, behind, away from, etc.

Sample statements to use at mealtime:

Mealtime concepts can be practiced in unlimited ways. Here are some examples of statements that are tailored to children in: (1) the early stages, and (2) the later stages of language development. Use statements like these to encourage language development at mealtime.

Purpose	Examples	Concepts
Naming	(1) "Mmmmm, jello" (2) "This is called Crunchy Tuna Casserole."	Nouns
Describing	(1) "This looks good." "The peas are green and round."	Adjectives
Explaining	(1) "You dropped your cookie. It broke!" (2) "First eat the chicken and potatoes. Then you can have dessert."	Actions
Comparing	(1) "Juice is cold. Soup is hot." (2) "Oranges are much sweeter than grapefruit."	Adjectives
Requesting	(1) "More milk?" (2) "Would you like me to cut your meat for you?"	Vocabulary Actions
Giving directions	(1) "Stay in your chair." (2) "Please put your dirty glass on the counter."	Location
Predicting	(1) "You're going to like this apple." (2) "That's your third cupcake! How do you think you're going to feel after dinner?"	Nouns

With a little practice, mealtime can become a rewarding learning experience for your child.

Talking Tips for Parents

Use these suggestions during everyday activities to encourage your child's language development:

1. Keep talking fun.
2. Reward and praise your child's communication attempts. It's not necessary to correct your child's grammar or pronunciation.
3. Use facial expressions and gestures to help your child understand.
4. Keep your sentences short and simple.
5. Speak slowly and clearly. Repeat for your child if necessary.
6. Emphasize key words you want your child to learn.
7. Repeat main ideas frequently, in as many different ways as possible.
8. Set a good example for your child. Model correct speech. It's not necessary to ask your child to repeat exactly what you say.
9. Give your child enough time to respond. Your child may take a long time to organize thoughts and feelings and put them into words. Avoid the tendency to interrupt your child.
10. Discuss your child's language abilities with your speech and language clinician. Try not to expect too much—or too little—of your child.
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Vocabulary

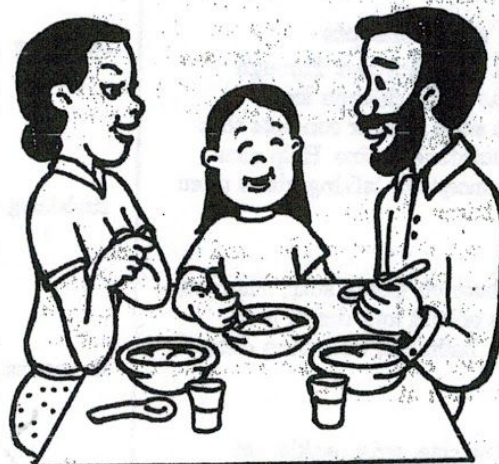
Concept—A general idea or characteristic applicable to several objects or events, which helps organize knowledge about the world.

Model—To provide an example of good speech or other behavior; to demonstrate a desired verbal response.

Speech and language clinician—A person who is qualified to diagnose and treat speech, language, and voice disorders.

Refer to:

- 2.1 Language Development
- 3.5 Pairing Movement With Learning
- 4.2 Learning Action Words
- 4.4 Help Your Child Learn Comparison Skills
- 5.1 Tips for Parents on Learning at Home
- 5.3 Talking During Bathtime
- 5.4 Talking During Dressing
- 5.5 Talking and Television



Talking During Bathtime

by *Anthony B. DeFeo, Ph.D.; Diann D. Grimm, M.A., C.C.C., Ed.S.;*
and *Patricia A. Paige, M.S., C.C.C.*

What's special about bathtime?

Bathtime is an ideal situation for language development. It gives you a chance to spend pleasurable, relatively unhurried time with your child. If your child's bathtime is in the morning, you have an opportunity to talk about plans for the day. An evening bath is a great time to discuss what happened during the day. A time to anticipate or a time to reflect—the bath routine can be a wonderful time to talk.

Taking a bath is a more playful time than other daily routines. It gives you and your child a chance to "play" with language too! In addition, bathtime can involve lots of action. There's splashing, washing, and playing with bath toys. So jump in! Take advantage of this important learning opportunity.

Bathtime Ideas and Concepts

Language is based on experiences. Through interaction with the world, children learn meaning. Here are some ideas or concepts that are a part of the bathtime routine. Help your child learn these concepts by talking about them during bathtime.

Nouns:

Towel, washcloth, bathtub, faucet, soap, shampoo, bubblebath, names of bath toys, drain, plug, showerhead, nozzle, bathroom, wall, soap dish, sponge, etc.

Body Parts:

Head, leg, arm, eyes, chin, wrist, ankle, etc.

Actions:

Rub, wash, scrub, splash, dry, rinse, kick, squirt, drip, pour, wiggle, etc.

Adjectives:

Wet/dry, clean/dirty, cold/hot, empty/full, big/little, rough/smooth, warm/cool, slippery/spongy, hard/soft, etc.

Location:

Up, down, in tub, out of tub, behind ear, under water, next to tub, over head, on the washcloth, stand up, etc.

Time Concepts:

Before/after, next, first, last, now, later, etc.

Water Concepts:

Sink/float, solid/liquid, bubbles, waves, pour, spray, etc.

Sample statements to use during bathtime:

Bathtime concepts can be practiced in unlimited ways. Here are some examples of statements that are tailored to children in: (1) the early stages, and (2) the later stages of language development. Use statements and questions like these to encourage language development during bathtime.

Purpose	Examples	Concepts
Naming	(1) "Look, a boat!"	Nouns
Expressing Opinion	(2) "Oh, what a nice bubble. I like this bubble"	
Describing	(1) "On your hair!" (2) "The soap is under the water."	Location
	(1) "I'm cold!" (2) "The water is too hot to get in now."	Adjective
Explaining	(1) "The boat stays on top. It floats." (2) "We can't pour that big bucket of water into that little cup. There's too much."	Water concepts
Comparing	(1) "Dirty hands, clean face." (2) "That brush is rough. But the soap is smooth."	Adjective
Requesting	(1) "Give me the towel." (2) "Could you pull the plug?"	Action
Giving directions	(1) "Please, get in the tub." (2) "Tilt your head back. I need to rinse off your hair."	Actions Location
Predicting	(1) "Oh, the duck will fall!" (2) "I think the soap will float. What do you think?"	Water Concepts
Pretending	(1) "You be Shamu." (2) "Why don't you make a splash like Shamu?"	Action

Talking Tips for Parents

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5. Speak slowly and clearly. Repeat for your child if necessary.
6. Emphasize key words you want your child to learn.
7. Repeat main ideas frequently, in as many different ways as possible.
8. Set a good example for your child. Model correct speech. It's not necessary to ask your child to repeat exactly what you say.
9. Give your child enough time to respond. Your child may take a long time to organize thoughts and feelings and put them into words. Avoid the tendency to interrupt your child.
10. Discuss your child's language abilities with your speech and language clinician. Try not to expect too much—or too little—of your child.
11. Avoid placing too much pressure on your child to talk. Your child may not want to "perform" verbally in front of others.

By using statements appropriate to your child's language level you will find that you can make bathtime a fun way for your child to learn language.

Vocabulary

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Talking During Dressing

by Anthony B. DeFoa, Ph.D.; Diann D. Grimm, M.A., C.C.C., Ed.S.;
and Patricia A. Paige, M.S., C.C.C.

What's special about dressing time?

The time you spend helping your child get dressed can easily become a language lesson. One-on-one attention is built into this situation. Dialogue is a natural part of it. You can talk about the here-and-now during dressing. ("Let's get your shirt over your head.") You can also talk about future events. ("We're going to the zoo today.")

Dressing is a series of actions that happen at least once a day, at about the same time and in a predictable order. The repetition involved in this experience is a great aid to language learning. Your child can expect certain language to be used over and over again within this familiar routine. This consistency of experience makes it easier for your child to learn new language.

Language forms such as plurals ("one foot, two feet") and prepositions ("socks on, shoes on") can be learned through daily discussion. Your child can also learn to communicate needs and wants. Then, the ability to express choices and opinions develops ("I want the blue shirt, not the red one").

Your child is also learning how to choose clothing based on weather (long pants versus shorts) and social events (play clothes versus dress-up clothes). Talking about how to make these decisions improves thinking skills.

Dressing Time Concepts

Language is based on ideas and experiences. Through interaction with the world, children learn meaning. Here are some concepts that are a natural part of the dressing routine. You can help your child learn these words and concepts by using them during dressing:

Nouns:

Shirt, socks, shoes, pants, dress, pajamas, etc.
Undershirt, underpants, diaper, slip, belt, button, zipper, sleeve, collar, etc.
Hat, raincoat, umbrella, boots, sunsuit, bathing suit, sunglasses, etc.

Major body parts:

Arm, leg, hand, foot, tummy, private parts, eye, ear, etc.

Less obvious body parts:

Fingers, cheeks, chin, elbow, wrist, heel, ankle, etc.

Actions:

Pull, push, put, raise, stand up, sit down, button, zip, snap, tie, hurry up, etc.

Prepositions:

On, off, in, out, through, around, over, etc.

Time/Sequence:

First, next, last, before, after, now, later, today, morning, afternoon, etc.

Adjectives:

Colors, dirty/clean, new/old, same/different, pretty/ugly, light/dark, hot/cold, warm/cool, long/short, right/left, striped, checked, plaid, print, etc.

Categories:

Things to wear on your feet, hands, head.

Things that keep you warm or cool.

Things with buttons, zippers, snaps, Velcro.

Number:

One, two, three, etc., a pair, every, each, same size, etc.

Sample statements to use during dressing

Dressing concepts can be combined in unlimited ways. Here are some examples of statements that are tailored to children in: 1) the early stages, and 2) the later stages of language development. Use statements and questions like these to encourage language development during dressing.

Purpose	Examples	Concepts
Naming	(1) "That's a shirt." (2) "There are your sneakers"	Nouns
Describing	(1) "Pretty dress." (2) "You look great in your new blue running suit."	Adjectives
Explaining	(1) "Oops, not this shirt. It's too small." (2) "You'll need a sweater for later. It's going to cool off this evening."	Adjectives Time/ Sequence
Comparing	(1) "Look! One red sock and one blue sock."	Adjectives

	(2) "This shirt has more buttons than the other one."	Numbers
Requesting	(1) "Get me a diaper, please." (2) "Where did you put your umbrella?"	Nouns
Giving Directions	(1) "Put your arms up." (2) "Get your pants over your feet. Then stand up and pull them up."	Actions/ Body Parts Actions/ Prepositions
Pretending	(1) "Wear this hat. Be a cowboy!" (2) "Why don't you put on your magician's cape and do some magic tricks?"	Nouns
Expressing Opinion	(1) "Sandals today or sneakers?" (2) "Which do you like better, the striped skirt or the plaid one?"	Nouns Adjectives

Use statements like these, and create your own, to practice language skills during dressing. You will find that dressing time can be a rewarding language experience for your child.

Vocabulary

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