



Top Ten Tips for Getting Your Child Ready for Kindergarten

Entire Slide Show will be available on familycenterweb.org



- **Build Strong Foundational Habits for Learning.** Know the Importance of Basic Physical Needs (Sleep, Nutrition, Rest because the brain is growing!), Behavioral Expectations (Consistent, Clear, Provide Consequences), Independence (Manage Own Needs), and Responsibility (Taking Care of Belongings, Do Simple Chores).
- **Understand Your Child as a Young Learner** Understand the brain and learning. Children learn with their whole body. Provide hands on experiences with play dough, finger paint and putty to develop fine motor skills. Know your child's unique profile of interests, strengths, challenges, temperament, and sensory processing. Does your child crave experiences or shy away?
- **Play and Exercise.** Visit the playground. Exercise and use the whole body. Hop, skip, and jump. Move! Provide unstructured time for independent play and play with friends. Make time for play dates with new friends. Play games together. Take turns. Follow directions. Use simple toys (blocks, play dough, dress up clothes) to spark imagination and thinking!
- **Talk Together.** Take turns talking and listening. Make eye contact. Know that tone of voice and body posture impact communicating. Talk about your child's interests. Introduce new terms to enlarge their vocabulary. Ask Wh questions to stimulate logical thinking "What do you think...?" There are no right or wrong answers. Focus on reasoning.
- **Visit Neat Places.** Take trips to the zoo, the museum, the science center, the Metro Parks and observe the world! Attend preschool, library story time, Family Center, and Neighborhood Club activities. Observe. Discuss. Enjoy!
- **Turn Disappointment, Frustration and Conflict into Learning Opportunities.** Consider how your child can learn a valuable lesson from a negative experience. Conflict with others can be an opportunity for growth. Use genuine empathy before delivering natural consequences.
- **Learn Everyday.** Work together. Count the spoons to set the table. Look at a recipe and bake cookies. Rake the leaves and look at the colors. Turn daily routines into valuable learning moments. **HAVE FUN!!!**
- **Sing, Dance, and Move to Music together.** Dance to music with a strong beat. Do finger plays. Use arm and hand movements. Cross the midline of the body. Use the car time to sing and rhyme. Recite or sing nursery rhymes. Listen for words that sound the same. Tap or clap the number of beats in your child's name.
- **Provide an Area for Writing, Drawing, Painting, Constructing.** Keep tools (pencils, scissors, crayons, paper, glue) nearby for easy use. Allow your child the freedom to create. Model how you write lists, messages, etc..
- **Read Together.** Re-read favorite stories! Ask questions. Have child read (retell) the story. Collect books and keep in a nearby area for rereading. Get a library card and visit the library. Look at the letters in signs and logos. Spell!

Extra Tips!!!

- ⇒ Parents are role models.
- ⇒ Limit TV and Electronic Media!!! Real life interaction over screen time.
- ⇒ Encourage by simply describing! Add language to the child's experience.



Build Strong Foundational Habits for Learning

Transition to Kindergarten Things to Consider

(From a Presentation by Lori Warner, Ph.D. for the Family Center on [Transition to Kindergarten](#), Feb. 2010)

- Logistical Changes for parents and kids, such as morning and afternoon routines.
- Prepare early (July, August) if you need to make a bedtime routine change.
- Talk to your child about the upcoming change.
- Separation from Parents and Caregivers
- Eating in a group setting-Does your child have an allergy, special dietary, health, or medical need?
- Issue of trust/working relationship with Educator

Behavioral Expectations:

- 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.*
- Can give choice between what you (parents) feel are 2 acceptable alternatives. "You can do "A" or "B."
- Sequence events for your child. "First A, then B."
- Limits are accepted more willingly when they point out the function of the object. "The chair is for sitting."
- Enforceable Statements: Tell what will happen or what you will allow instead of what child should do. "I will listen to you when your voice is calm."
- Sources: Conscious Discipline, [Love and Logic Magic for Early Childhood](#) by Jim Fay and Dr. Charles Fay



Understand How Young Children Learn

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? .

Quality of Mood: What is the child's basic disposition? .

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.

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?

Adapted from the work of Turecki and Tonner as cited in [Conscious Discipline](#) by Becky A. Bailey, Ph.D. pp. 49-50.

Visit Neat Places

1. Detroit Zoo
2. Belle Isle Nature Zoo
3. Michigan Science Center
4. Greenfield Village and Henry Ford Museum
5. Ann Arbor Hands on Museum
6. Detroit Kid City
7. Red Oaks Nature Center in Madison Heights
8. Wolcott Mill
9. Area Apple Orchards and Cider Mills
10. Toledo Zoo

Understand the Value of Play 10 Great Play Items

1. Plain wooden boxes of various sizes
2. Dress up Clothes, Pretend Props
3. Play dough
4. Legos-Large and small
5. Shape Sorters, nesting cups
6. Puzzles-Inset, Jigsaw, Floor
7. Simple Board Games-Candy land, Chutes & Ladders, Hi Ho Cherry O, Card Games-Go Fish
8. Dolls and Action figures with props
9. Marble works
10. Doll Houses, Barn, Airport, Garage with figures

Great Deals at Garage Sales!!!

Sometime incomplete sets are great, forces child to use imagination for the missing piece.

Play Dough Recipe

Mix and cook on LOW in pan until ball forms, then Knead

- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup water
- 1 cup salt
- 1 T. cream of tartar

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



Sing, Dance, and Move to Music! 10 Great Songs and Finger plays

1. Twinkle, twinkle little Star
2. Hey Diddle Diddle
3. Jack and Jill
4. Old Mother Hubbard
5. Humpty Dumpty
6. Where is Thumbkin?
7. Hokey Pokey
8. Head and Shoulders
9. To Market To Market
10. Itsy Bitsy Spider

Don't remember your nursery rhymes or finger plays?
Go to nurseryrhymes4u.com &

Resources to Google

- Writings and works of Stanley Greenspan, M.D.
- [Great Kids](#) by Stanley Greenspan, M.D.
- [Conscious Discipline](#) by Dr. Becky Bailey
- [Love and Logic](#) by Jim Fay
- [Parenting from the Inside Out](#) by Dan Siegel, M.D.
- [30 Million Words](#) by Dana Suskind, M.D.
- [The WholeBrain Child](#) by D. Siegel & T.Bryson .
- Daily Vroom App

How Parents Can Help Prepare Their Children for Kindergarten

From GPPSS Website

Parents and teachers recognize that each child grows at his or her own particular rate. Parents can help develop a happy inter-relationship between home and school by encouraging children in the following areas:

Putting On Clothes

- Knowing his or her own clothing (put name on coats, hats, scarves, mittens, and boots)
- Putting on clothes in logical order
- Buttoning and/ or zipping coats
- Putting on outdoor clothing
- Tying shoes (Send your child in slip-on or Velcro shoes until this skill is learned.)
- Hanging up clothes in orderly fashion

Using the Toilet

- To go to the toilet without help (have clothing which can be managed alone)
- To flush the toilet
- To wash hands after flushing the toilet

Healthy Habits

- Before school begins, establish a morning routine in your home.
- Sleep ten to twelve hours each night
- Enjoy quiet time during the day
- Eat well- balanced and unhurried meals (hungry and tired children are not good candidates for a successful school day)
- Wash hands before eating
- Learn to turn the head or use a tissue when sneezing or coughing

Safety

- Teach your child his or her full address and phone number.
- Teach your child the way to school.
- Teach him or her to look both ways before crossing the street.

Developing Desirable Play Habits

- Play with brothers and sisters
- Play and share with other children
- Make new friends

Talking and Listening

- Encourage your child to speak in short sentences about things which interest him or her.
- Encourage your child to look at the speaker.
- Encourage your child to take turns speaking and listening in group conversations
- Help him or her to speak distinctly.
- Read books to your child each day, and reinforce good listening skills.
- Encourage your child to follow 3 step directions.

Gross (Large Muscle) Motor Skills

- Provide opportunities for outdoor play
- Encourage your child to run and skip
- Teach your child how to throw, catch, and kick a ball

Fine Motor Skills

- Give your child opportunities to work with crayons, pencils, and washable markers.
- Reinforce correct pencil grip (See the A-OK handout.)
- Provide opportunities for your child to cut paper with scissors.
- Encourage work with toys that will strengthen your child's hands or hand-eye coordination – small building toys like legos, pegboards or Lite-Brite, puzzles, play- doh.

Getting Ready to Read

- Teach your child to write his or her name using correct form (First letter only in uppercase.)
- Work on identifying colors.
- Sing the alphabet song and add an ABC Book to your daily read-aloud.
- Work on naming letters.
- Read to your child each day. On several pages, run your finger under the line of print as you read.
- Encourage your child to draw pictures and to tell you about the pictures.

Getting Ready for Math

- Count aloud with your child to 20.
- Count up to 10 objects with 1 to 1 correspondence.
- Work on identifying numerals to 10.
- Begin to write numbers to 10.
- Add a number book to your read-aloud time.
- Work on naming shapes – circle, square, rectangle, triangle, oval, diamond.
- Have your child help sort items – toys, socks, etc.

From GPPSS Website