

## SUGGESTIONS TO HELP PREPARE YOUR CHILD FOR KINDERGARTEN

Discover with your child that print is all around us. Look for words and letters while driving together in the car, going shopping, taking walks. Look for letters around the house on cereal boxes, labels, mail, appliances, newspaper headlines, coupons, and even TV shows such as "Wheel of Fortune". Name the letters with your child and have your child take turns naming the letters. Mold clay or twist pipe cleaners into the shapes of letters. Write letters with a stick in the sand. Name the letters as you make them together.

Associate sounds with letters. Invite your child to listen to words that begin with the same sound. Say the names of two items such as juice and jelly. Ask if the words begin with the same sound. Have your child then name the letter that represents that sound. Vary the activity by sometimes naming pairs of words that do not begin with the same sound such as cat and goat. For another variation, name three words such as dog, baby, dish and then have your child tell which two begin with the same sound. Name the letter that is associated with that sound.

Say simple nursery rhymes—"Little Miss Muffet", "Jack and Jill", "Hickory, Dickory, Dock", etc. Have your child listen for and name the rhyming words. Try to think of additional words that rhyme with those in the nursery rhyme.

Hunt for sounds around the house or while in the car. Choose a letter and look for as many things as you can find that day that begin with that letter. The next day choose a new letter and do the same.

### **Read to your child daily and talk about the stories that you read.**

Research indicates that children who are read to frequently usually do better in reading in school. Let your child see that reading is important to you also.

Make sure that your child has experience using scissors. Have your child cut on lines that you draw on a paper so that the child knows how to control the scissors and the paper at the same time.

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Make sure that your child is grasping the pencil correctly with the thumb and pointer finger. The pencil should rest on the middle finger. The other two fingers on the hand do not touch the pencil.

Begin letters and numerals from the top.

Have your child practice printing his or her name with the first letter capital and the rest of the letters lowercase.

Become familiar with numbers. Look for numbers on phones, addresses, price tags, TV channels, elevators, calendars, license plates, page numbers, etc. Name the numerals with your child when you see them. Look for a specific numeral and see which of you can find it first.

As your child counts a set of objects, make sure he or she is saying one number for each object and not just counting by rote. There are a lot of things to count around the house . . . buttons, spoons, books on a shelf, socks as you fold the laundry, pennies in a bank, steps to cross the room, steps as you go upstairs or downstairs, etc.

Start a pattern and see if your child can copy the pattern. Make a pattern and see if your child can put the next piece in the pattern. For example:

fork, spoon, fork, spoon, fork, spoon . . .

button, button, penny, button, button, penny . . .

crayon, pencil, spoon, crayon, pencil, spoon . . .

Your child should know his or her personal information—full name, birthday, address, and telephone number.

Your child should be able to dress himself or herself independently including fastening buttons, snaps, zippers, and tying shoes.

Encourage your child to develop helpful habits. Habits that will help at school including putting things away, learning to listen, taking turns, doing simple chores, getting along with others, and sticking to a schedule.