

Activities to Help Prepare Your Child for Kindergarten

- **Practice writing his/her first and last name**
 1. Have your child practice writing his/her name using a variety of tools such as a Magna Doodle, crayons, pencils, and markers. Check that your child is gripping the writing utensil correctly. You may even consider having your child practice writing his/her name using different items around the house such as pudding, rice, sand, or shaving cream.
**** Be sure that your child uses a capital letter only at the beginning and lowercase letters for the rest of the name.*
 2. Write your child's name in large letters (or use magnetic letters). Say each letter aloud as you write or place it so your child can associate the name of the letter with the shape of the letter.
 3. Cut apart the letters of your child's name (or use magnetic letters) and have him/her put them back in the correct order saying the name of each letter while doing so. (Start with just the first name, adding the last name only when they have mastered this.)
 4. Label your child's door or other objects so his/her name can be seen in print.
- **Practice recognizing and writing the numbers 0 to 10 (or higher)**
 1. Read and enjoy counting books together.
 2. Point out numbers in license plates, in the store, in your home, and all around you.
 3. Use magnetic numbers to have your child practice naming them. Have your child put the numbers for your phone number in order saying each number while doing so.
 4. Practice writing numbers with a variety of materials such as pencils, crayons, markers, sidewalk chalk, etc...as in name writing above. (see number formation sheet in folder).
- **Practice counting orally and practice counting objects (to 10 or higher)**
 1. Have your child count his/her own snacks such as pretzels, goldfish crackers, grapes, etc...
 2. Count each item as you pick up 10 things to put away in the house or bedroom.
 3. Count the number of stair steps in your house or the number of steps from your car to the store.
- **Practice naming and correctly writing the letters in the alphabet**
 1. Read and enjoy alphabet books together.
 2. Help your child recognize letters of the alphabet in everyday life (ex. Restaurants, road signs, store signs, cereal boxes, etc...).
 3. Explore with magnetic letters (see the activity sheet in the folder).
 4. Practice recognizing and writing both upper and lowercase letters. (see letter information sheet in folder).

- **Practice book handling skills**
 1. Discuss how to open the book from the front. Point out the front of the book versus the back. Discuss the front of the book is where the story begins and the back is where the story ends.
 2. Discuss how to hold a book so it is not upside down and where to start reading.
 3. Read with your child on a daily basis.

- **Practice recognizing the eight primary colors**
 1. When your child is coloring, ask what colors were used.
 2. Have your child draw objects on paper and ask him/her to color the objects in certain colors.
 3. Have your child sort objects or food by colors such as clothes, blocks, Skittles, M&M's, or Fruit Loops to name a few and then name the colors.
 4. Discuss colors of things in the world around you such as the sky, the grass, cars, clothing items.

- **Practice naming and drawing the six basic shapes (circle, triangle, square, rhombus, ellipse, rectangle)**
 1. Point out objects in your house or environment that have the basic shapes such as doors, windows, clocks, can tops, kites, etc...
 2. Read and enjoy shape books together.
 3. Have your child draw the shapes on chalkboards, paper, etc....then cut them out naming each shape while doing so.

- **Practice your phone number and address**
 1. Have your child practice the phone number on a play telephone.
 2. Make up a rhyme or song to go along with your phone number that your child can remember. Practice it regularly.

- **Practice coloring within the line and cutting on the lines**
 1. Have your child cut out coupons.
 2. Have your child cut out pictures from old magazines of things that he/she is interested in.
 3. Have your child draw simple objects with some detail (including "self, family, house, and pets).
 4. Explore coloring with a variety of resources including markers, crayons, chalk, and paint.

Some Tips to Help with Beginning Reading and Writing

The greatest benefits of reading are obtained when the child is an active participant engaging in discussion about stories, talking about meanings of words and the story, predicting outcomes, and relating the story matter to other texts and his/her own life.

1. Read to your child daily.
2. Talk about the book as you read with your child and after you have finished reading it.
3. Look at the book cover before reading. Point out the title, author, and illustrator.
4. Point out words or phrases that are repeated several times throughout the story.
5. Encourage your child to finish predictable phrases or rhymes.
6. Remember to focus on the meaning of the story. If a child reads something that doesn't make sense, often he or she will go back and try again. If this doesn't happen, stop and ask, "Does that make sense?"
7. If your child comes to a word he or she does not know and asks for help, consider asking these questions:
 - a. Does the picture give you a clue?
 - b. What word would make sense here?
 - c. With what letter does the word begin (or end)?

If these strategies fail and your child wants you to say the word, go ahead and do so rather than having your child labor over it.

8. Don't worry if your child memorizes a particular phrase or story. That is an early stage in the reading process.
9. Encourage your child to point to the word with his or her finger as he/she reads.
10. Some helpful questions:
 - ❖ What happened at the beginning, middle, or the end of the story?
 - ❖ What do you think will happen next?
 - ❖ Why do you think the character did that?
 - ❖ What would you have done if you were that character?
 - ❖ What was the best thing about the story?
11. Make sure your child sees you as a reader, (reading a newspaper, enjoying a good book, reading a catalog, etc...)
12. When reading with a child, always sit beside the child with the book between you so that you can both see the text and enjoy the pictures.
13. Consider giving books as presents so they become associated with a pleasurable experience and have special meaning.
14. Make sure your child sees you also as a writer, (writing things such as grocery lists, thank you notes, notes to other family members, etc....)
15. Have a wide variety of writing supplies available for your child to write and draw on including various sizes and types of paper, pencils, crayons markers, chalk, etc...
16. When your child draws a picture, encourage him/her to tell you about it. Then write down what the child says as he/she says it. Let your child see you write down what is said. Read it back. Point to the words as you read.