



School Readiness Tip Sheet

A Parent is a Child's First Teacher

Did you know that what a child's family does at home makes more of an impact on a child's total education than any formal schooling? Parents can and DO make a big difference.

All parents want to do what is best for their children. By taking advantage of everyday moments in your child's life, you will help them grow and increase your own enjoyment and growth as a parent.

- Respond to your child. Put your phone down, look them in the eye, use a calm voice and gentle touch. You are teaching them how to treat other people by how you treat them.
- Talk with your child, a lot. Simple, everyday conversations increase your child's vocabulary and language skills. For very young children, tell them what you are doing and seeing. Respond to their efforts to communicate with you.
- Have books in the house and read to your child every day. Pick a regular time such as bedtime but also be ready to read whenever your child brings you a book.
- Put routines in place in your home. Routines help organize life. Children do best when they know what to expect. Having a regular schedule of school or work times, sticking to regular family meals and bedtime routines will give your child a sense of security and safety.
- Use discipline consistently. Discipline means to teach. Setting limits and following through when rules are broken helps your child learn to control their own behavior. When you follow through, your child learns to trust you and that you mean what you say.
- Talk with your child about his or her feelings and actions. Help children name strong feelings and give them appropriate ways to express their emotions. Let them know how their actions affect others.



- Set limits on how much screen time and what kinds of programs/games your child watches.
- Let them play. Not games on a screen but whole body, imaginative play. Play outdoors!
- Use resources to help you get a basic understanding of child development. Knowing what stage of development your child is at will help you have appropriate expectations for their behavior.
- Be a partner with your child's teachers. Working together as a team helps your child learn best.