What you can do to get your child ready for Kindergarten

**Letter Identification**

- Sing the Alphabet Song with your child.
- Play games using the alphabet. *For example:* I spy something that begins with the letter M.
- With your child sitting next to you, print the letters of your child’s name on paper and say each letter as you write it.
- Help your child to spell and write his/her name. At first he/she may use just a few letters. *For example:* Jenny might use the letters J N Y.
- With your child, make a name sign for your child’s room.
- Point out individual letters in signs, posters, food containers like cereal boxes, menus, posters, or magazines.
- Read ABC books with your child.
- Give your Child a page from a magazine. Circle a letter on the page and have him/her circle matching letters.
- Watch TV shows with your child, such as “Between the Lions”, “Blues Clues,” and “Sesame Street” that feature letter learning activities for your children.

**Phonics**

- Look at pictures or objects. Ask your child to say the sound the picture or object begins with.
- Have your child find another picture or object that begins with the same sound.
- As you read a story or poem, ask your child to listen for and say words that begin with the same sound. Then have him/her think of and say another word that begins with the same sound.
- Write letters on pieces of paper and put them in a paper bag. Have your child pull out a paper from the bag and say the name of the letter and the sound that it represents. Then have him/her say a word that begins with the same sound.
- Cut pictures from magazines or draw pictures to help your child make his/her own alphabet book.
- Let your child have fun writing the alphabet letters, his/her name, and stories. Let your child share his/her writing. Praise your child’s effort to write.

**Word Recognition**

- Place alphabet magnets on your refrigerator. Encourage your child to make simple words. *For example:* cat, dog, mom, dad.
- Read books with your child and point out common words. *For example:* the, I, go, a, and, see, like, me, you.
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Oral Language & Vocabulary

• Talk with your child about daily routines and experiences.
• Read books with your child and talk about the story or information.
• Ask your child questions.
• Encourage your child to speak in sentences.
• Encourage your child to play and talk with other children.
• Provide opportunities for your child to do and see new things. Go for walks in your neighborhood, visit the Zoo, Library, and other places of interest.
• Provide opportunities for your child to draw, dance, listen to music, and make music. Talk about it.
• Provide opportunities for your child to have hands-on experiences to do things in the world. For example: touch objects, pet animals, observe bugs, help with cooking, smell and taste foods, watch cars and trucks move. Talk about how objects look, smell, and feel.
• Ask your child to follow simple directions and encourage him/her to do many things independently. For example: getting dressed, setting the table, preparing a snack.

Concepts About Print

• As you read with your child:
  • Read the title on the cover.
  • Talk about the picture on the cover.
  • Point to where the story starts and later to where it ends.
  • Let your child help turn the pages.
  • When you start a new page, point to where the words of the story continue.
  • Follow the words by moving your finder underneath the words.
  • Encourage your child to move his/her finger underneath the words as you read.

Phonemic Awareness

• Singing rhyming songs with your child.
• Read and recite nursery rhymes with your child. As you read, stop before a rhyming word and encourage your child to fill in the blank. For example: Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall, Humpty Dumpty had a great _______.
• Around your home, point to objects and say their names. For example: ball, tall, wall.
• Say three words such as cat, dog, and sat and ask your child which words rhyme.
• Say silly tongue twisters with your child. For example: Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.
• Help your child make up and say silly sentences with lots of words that start with the same sound. For example: Betty bought a big, blue balloon.