

EarlyON Child and Family Centre



RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES
PREPARING FOR KINDERGARTEN



TRANSITIONING TO SCHOOL

Going to kindergarten is an exciting time for children and their families, but it can also be a time of anxiety and nervousness. Being prepared will help ease some of those feelings and make the transition easier for you and your child. Here are a few tips to make the experience a positive one:

- **Get familiar with the school.** Walk by, talk about the playground and what they will do at school. Build positive thoughts about going to school.
- **Foster independence.** Practice dressing and undressing, opening lunch containers, and using the washroom on their own. Talk about asking the teacher or a friend for help when they need it.
- **Establish a morning routine.** Get up when you would on a school day and rehearse the steps for getting out the door.
- **Read books about starting kindergarten.** This is a great way to start conversations about how they're feeling about going to school. Let them ask questions and answer them honestly.

ARE THEY "READY" FOR KINDERGARTEN?

Kindergarten is a place to learn and grow. Being "ready" can't simply be measured by whether they know their ABCs and 123s. Hard skills like being able to print, use scissors, and recognize their name are all great things to practice in preparation for kindergarten, but their soft skills like being able to communicate with others, follow directions, and problem solve are just as important. These social-emotional skills play a crucial role in their learning in kindergarten, and their overall success in school!

LEARNING IN THE OUTDOORS

"Nature is not just good for kids' health; it improves their ability to learn."

- Ming Kuo

6 benefits to providing children time in nature:

Playing, taking a walk or even a view of nature restores children's attention.

- Nature relieves children's stress and helps them recover from stressful events.
- Nature helps children develop self discipline.
- Children are more engaged and interested even when they come back indoors.
- Children are more physically active.
- Getting outdoors can enhance relationships with others.

All these skills and qualities are easily transferred to school

For further reading on this research access Ming Kuo, Greater Good Magazine, a free e-publication of the Greater Good Science Center at University of California, Berkeley.

Nature provides a rich assortment of free 'loose parts'- sticks, stones, mud & leaves that encourage exploration, creativity, imagination and problem solving.



Try this fun activity

Ice Cube Painting

Painting with ice cubes is a great way to strengthen those fine motor skills needed to tie shoe laces, hold a pencil or open a lunch box.



EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING ~ SIGNS AND SIGNALS



Young children may not have the words or emotional intelligence to verbalize their needs. However, they can communicate their needs in other subtle ways.

When it comes to emotional needs, each one of us has a LOVE language that we speak. Dr. Gary Chapman identifies this in his book 'The 5 Love Languages'.

- **"Cuddle me! Chase me!" (physical touch)** If your child looks for lots of cuddles or likes to be chased -they may be yearning for physical touch. Though a hug might say "I love you" to all kids, for ones who adore physical touch, it shouts, "I LOVE YOU!" To fill this need offer lots of cuddles, kisses, lap time and high fives.
- **"Presents, please!" (receiving gifts)** Children who feel loved when they receive gifts aren't just looking for more stuff, they see the gift as a symbol of your love. It can be anything from a very smooth stone to a ball of yarn in just the color they mentioned liking two Tuesdays ago. Although it's fine to keep a closet full of wrapped dollar-store toys, you don't need to spend money. Try leaving an origami creation on your child's chair or a wildflower on their pillow.
- **"Talk to me!" (words of affirmation)** For kids who listen intently and speak sweetly, your loving words matter most. Little notes in their lunch box, texts and jewellery/trinkets with special words can mean the world to these kids.
- **"You do it for me!" (acts of service)** These children appreciate thoughtful gestures. Support your child while introducing and learning new processes and skills.
- **"Come here! Look at this!" (quality time)** These children feel most valued when you choose to spend quality time with them.

Understanding your child's needs strengthens your connection and builds their confidence.

<https://www.parents.com/parenting/better-parenting/advice/love-languages-of-children/>

School nutrition break hints

Generally there are two 20 minute nutrition breaks in school.

Rehearse a 20 minute break to eat lunch.

Help your child make the most of the time by peeling their fruit ahead of time and cutting foods into bite size pieces, or let them practice this over the summer.

Allow for practice in opening/closing containers & lunch pails.



"Learning and teaching should not stand on the opposite banks and just watch the river flow by; instead, they should embark together on a journey down the water."~ Loris Malaguzzi

READ, READ, READ!

And then read some more! Read constantly, and not just books: the cereal box, the ingredients on food packages or street signs as you are walking.

Create a life-long reader by exposing your children to all kinds of literature!



Books to read to help prepare for school

The Kissing Hand
by Audrey Penn

The Pout Pout Fish Goes to School
by Deborah Diesen

Pete the Cat: Rocking in My School Shoes
by Eric Litwin

Llama Llama Misses Mama
by Anna Dewdney

Helpful Websites

Frequently check your child's school website as there are many great resources available to you.

Early Years Check In

The Early Years Check-In is a simple tool of 11 items relating to social, emotional, language, movement, thinking and learning skills. Discover what steps you can take to foster your child's development.

development.<https://eyci.healthhq.ca/en>

Eye See I Learn

Is your child seeing well?
Are they eligible for free glasses?

<http://www.eyeseeyelearn.com>

