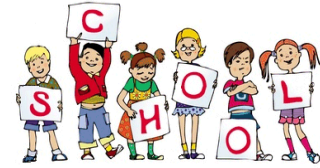


Great Start to School Program

Helping your child build learning skills



Helping my child read by:

- Reading bedtime stories/books reading/sharing books (a great way to build vocabulary)
- Letting your child turn the pages and showing them that we read left to right.
- Talking about reading print/letters as well as the pictures.
- Looking for the letters of the child name in words.
- Extending your child's thinking by asking questions.
- Having some books to read at home (join the library- it's free)
- Saying and singing nursery rhymes and songs
- Identifying the starting sounds of words ('dog' starts with 'd')
- Looking at street signs or shop signs
- Helping the child recognize (and write) their own name

Helping my child to write by:

- Explaining that writing is important, and we need to learn how to write to communicate
- Modeling writing and encouraging your child to copy words
- Setting up a special writing space with you child, using cheap pencils paper etc.
- Providing simple words or names for them to copy.
- Writing their own name on cards and ask them to copy it
- Writing shopping lists, letter to Santa etc. together
- Encouraging and praising every effort.
- Modelling writing lower case letters because this is what they do at school, and it will set them up for success.

Helping my child develop language and communication skills by:

- Encouraging your child to speak for themselves
- Repeating their attempts into grammatically correct sentences (modelling)
- Rehearsing with your child what they need to say to ask for something, then encourage them to ask on their own.
- Listening games - Simon says, what can you hear (e.g., moo, brrrrmmm)
- Following directions - giving your child 2-3 step silly/fun directions as well as practical ones. ("take off your shoes and put them in the box")
- Talking on the phone to others
- Demonstrating talking in complete sentences, not just "yep", or "Nup".
- Noticing facial expressions
- Sharing a meal together and talking about your day.
- Asking your child questions and allow them time to respond.
- Reading together, talk about what's happening in the book, or guessing what might happen next in the story
- Giving your child messages to relay to others
- Having lots of rich conversations with and around your child.

When your child starts school, they will learn the sounds that letters and letter combinations make. This is called phonics. Helping them to identify and say the sounds for the letters (s a t p i n) will give them a head start as these are the first 6 letter/sounds that they learn.

Helping my child with numeracy and maths by:

- Counting things (one spoon, two spoons, how many spoons are in the draw?)
- Subtracting things (if Mummy has 3 socks, and she puts 2 away in the draw, how many are left?)
- Reading the clock, thinking about times of the day, weeks, or seasons
- Cooking using measuring cups, spoons.
- Using language for order; first, second, third, last
- Using language for position; under, over, behind, beside, in front of
- Using language for size; big, bigger, biggest, thin, thick, large, tiny
- Learning about shapes: square, triangle, rectangle, circle,
- Classifying and sorting games such as Memory, sorting toys by shape, colour, size etc
- Shopping; counting apples, looking at prices, handling money, change etc
- Learning the days of the week (*NB teachers say this is very helpful!)
- Counting steps or hops or bounces on the trampoline
- Counting number of arms and legs when dressing, counting fingers and toes
- Writing or show numbers “This is number Five (5) – you have Five fingers!”
- Asking “How many chairs do we need for Christmas dinner?”
- Role modelling use numeracy: “It’s great that Mummy can count because now she knows how many eggs she has left in the fridge”.

Helping my child to learn through play by:

- Encouraging imaginary play - dress ups, mimicking TV, or book characters – asking your child to tell you about who they are and what they are doing.
- Building blocks, Lego, making things – expands eye/hand coordination and fine motor skills
- Using playdoh, gluing, painting – talking about what they are doing
- In the sandpit or during other play, encouraging your child to be a ‘little scientist’ – “what happens when you pour the water into the hole? Where does it go?”
- Climbing, jumping, playing boisterous games – this helps to build gross motor skills and coordination.
- Role modelling being ‘playful’ – parents are allowed to be silly sometimes!

Helping my child to learn through being social by:

- Encouraging consideration of others and taking turns (any games that include turn taking)
- Encouraging sharing and getting along – play dates, playing games with siblings etc
- Taking notice of what other children are doing and saying.
- Role modelling and encouraging empathy. This helps your child to learn about their own, and other’s feelings. (Walking in their shoes)
- Remembering to say ‘please and ‘thank you’ when talking with your child. They will copy you.
- Role modelling speaking nicely to others and being a good friend, yourself.