

Is Your Child Ready to Learn? Birth to 3 Years: Information for Parents and Caregivers



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Summary: Children are born ready to learn. Children are naturally curious and want to learn and make sense of the world around them. Children learn best through everyday experiences with the people they love and trust, and when learning is fun.

Introduction

Children are born ready to learn. Children are naturally curious and want to learn and make sense of the world around them. Children learn best through everyday experiences with the people they love and trust, and when learning is fun.

You can encourage your child's readiness to learn in the following ways:

Literacy Skills

You can help your child by

- singing songs and playing with rhymes
- offering age-appropriate books
- cuddling and reading together everyday
- discovering the library together

Physical Development and Well-Being

You can help your child to:

- Follow a routine
- Explore and play in a safe environment
- Eat nutritious snacks and meals
- Have fun playing inside and outside and finding activities you enjoy as a family
- Have plenty of sleep
- Get immunization (shots) on time
- Have a smoke-free environment

Language and Communication Skills

You can help your child by:

- Imitating your child's sounds
- Speaking simply, clearly and slowly
- Using the proper words, not "baby-talk"
- Looking and listening when your child talks to you
- Pointing out and naming the things you see
- Talking to your child about what you are doing
- Reading with your child everyday

Social and Emotional Development

You can help your child by:

- Responding to your child when he is upset and providing him/her comfort
- Practicing to leave your child with a caregiver for short periods
- Having fun and playing peek a boo
- Acknowledging your child's worries and fears
- Praising your child on a job well done
- Setting limits and being consistent with your child
- Helping him/her make simple choices
- Giving him/her opportunities to play with others

Learning (Cognitive) Skills

You can help your child by:

- Playing make believe together
- Allowing your child to play with different shapes and textures
- Providing stacking toys so your child can figure out how things fit together
- Counting things as you use them - steps, buttons, crackers...
- Helping your child to develop his/her imagination

Remember... You are your child's first and most important teacher!

- Your child has learned and will continue to learn an incredible amount from you and from all the experiences he/she has had.
- There are services and programs available in the community to support early learning in partnership with you.
- Be involved by communicating, participating and supporting your child's development.
- It takes a community to raise a child.

About this Document

Written by members of the Best Start Network of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry, Ontario, Canada.

Disclaimer

Information in this pamphlet is offered 'as is' and is meant only to provide general information that supplements,

but does not replace the information from your health provider. Always contact a qualified health professional for further information in your specific situation or circumstance.

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