

## Preparing for Kindergarten

Children at this age learn and grow best through their play and daily activities. Families can nurture this development and help support the transition to kindergarten by offering age-appropriate experiences and activities in a variety of areas.

- [Activity Calendars](#) - activities, recipes, rhymes and parenting tips to encourage developmental skills in children from birth to 5 years of age (Alberta Health Services)
- [Growth and Development Milestones](#) (MyHealth.Alberta.ca)

## Communication and Literacy

- Explore and highlight print in home and community. For example, pointing out signs and print you see in grocery stores or signs you see as you walk or drive offer a way for children to see how important letters and numbers are. Opportunities to have [meaningful experiences with print](#) are very important at this stage of development.
- Provide opportunities for children to see and interact with letters. Ideas include having a magnetic set of letters, posting an alphabet strip or wall chart, exploring words that are important to your child—for example, their name, their family's names, your pets' names etc. Here are some ideas of ways to [practice sequencing names and other meaningful words](#). A [template](#) is also available to help your child practice printing their name, if your child is ready and interested in this.
- Recite rhymes and songs to increase awareness of letter sounds, play rhyming games and practice traditional nursery rhymes.
- Read together as part of a daily routine. Make the story a conversation! Explore new words and ideas together. Here are some [ideas](#).
- Oral language and storytelling is a key strategy to help learners with comprehension.
  - Let your child retell to another person in the family an event that happened. For example, "Tell Dad what you did at the park."
  - Ask them to describe 'how' to do something to a sibling or parent. For example, "Tell me how to make a sandwich."
  - Encourage them to share a story they've created.
- [Talk Box](#), from the Government of Alberta, is a parent's guide to creating language rich environments. It gives parents suggestions to help create language-rich environments at home, in the park, at the mall or anywhere. It's meant to be a

resource for any parent. It's not meant to be a substitute for a speech-language pathologist.

- [Talk Box: Your 4 Year Old!](#)
- [Talk Box: Your 5 Year Old!](#)

## Numeracy

- Have fun finding shapes in your environment, draw together talking about the lines and shapes you or your child is making.
- Count often! Count as you go up stairs, handing out a snack, or when cooking or baking together.
- Play simple [dice](#) and [card](#) games, if your child is ready for these kinds of structured games.
- Take the opportunity to have your child take part in activities that involve sorting—for example, laundry, recycling or cleaning up toys.

## Motor Skills

- There are many activities your child can do to get ready to print that are fun and use common items that you can find in your home. Children usually develop printing and drawing skills in a certain progression, use this [guide](#) to help you understand the best kinds of activities for where your child is currently at.
- A [Creation Station](#) is a great way to both encourage your child to have fun creating from their imagination and work on developing skills for kindergarten.
- Puzzles are a fun way for some children to practice visual perceptual skills. Here are some ideas of how you can offer [puzzles](#) your child will enjoy.
- Provide a lot of opportunities for outdoor play. Here are the [Canadian 24 Hour Movement Guidelines](#) for children 5-17 years old.

## Self-Help Skills

- Have your child involved in age-appropriate chores such as putting away laundry, setting the table or feeding the family pet.
- Build independence with self-help activities. This [guide](#) provides ideas to foster development of independence skills in a positive way before the start of school.

## Social-Emotional Development

- Continue to provide activities to help stimulate curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, particularly around things that interest your child.
- Be positive and relaxed about going to school. If your child has any worries or fears, acknowledge them and try some of these [tips](#).
- Work on building your child's [emotional vocabulary](#), being able to describe feelings can help your child cope better in new situations.
- Take opportunities to help your child navigate feelings of [disappointment](#) and [frustration](#).
- If [turn-taking](#) and [sharing](#) are challenging for your child, have your child participate in small groups with other children where you are available to help coach them.

Remember to book an [eye assessment/exam](#) before your child starts kindergarten to diagnose any vision or eye-health problems.