

How to Support Your Child's Readiness for Kindergarten

Your child has experienced a tremendous amount of growth and development in the past 4 years, now it's time for school! Children learn through moving, exploring and having fun. Children learn new skills, understand concepts and build confidence by exploring their environment.

Physiotherapists and occupational therapists are healthcare professionals who have an in-depth knowledge of how a child's body moves and develops. Our team of physiotherapists and occupational therapists work within the York Region District School Board to support all children to be successful at school. We can also support individual students if they experience challenges with everyday activities that are important to them.

Our board's physiotherapists and occupational therapists can assist students if they are experiencing challenges in the following areas:

- Being productive in the classroom e.g using crayons or pencils, building with blocks, using small tools, participating in carpet time
- Managing their own self-care e.g dressing, feeding or toileting
- Engaging in play e.g making friends, participating in physical and outdoor activities

We have provided in this handout some sample activities you and your child may enjoy. **If your child is interested in an activity and having fun, they are learning and developing!**

Supporting Your Child as They Move and Explore



Explore Outdoors

When possible, frequent neighbourhood parks and playgrounds. Encourage your child to run, climb, jump, swing and move in different ways (fast, slow, hang upside down, rolling, forward, backward, at varying heights). This will build muscle strength, endurance, balance and coordination that will support motor skills, cooperative play, regulation, attention and focus in school.

Move and Explore

You and your child, can play together in ways that involve moving a variety of materials through space. Throwing socks into a hamper, building pillow forts, keeping balloons in the air, rolling balls up or down surfaces, carrying objects in/on something, scooping, pouring, pushing and pulling. These tasks will build skills that support hand eye coordination, accuracy, motor planning, visual-spatial awareness and play skills.



Help at Home

Encourage your child to help with household activities and chores. While it may take a bit longer, allowing your child to participate in these daily activities creates opportunities for them to practice skills they will need at school. Activities like dressing and undressing, taking shoes on/off, bed-time routines (brushing teeth, washing face), and toileting routines (wiping, flushing, hand washing) will build their skills and independence.



Practice opening and closing lunch style containers, opening juice boxes and water bottles, self-feeding finger foods and eating with child size utensils. These skills will increase their independence and strengthen the small muscles of their hands to support pencil and paper activities.

Have your child help you sort laundry, put groceries away, carry bags, pouring and mixing baking ingredients. These activities and others similar, will support their ability to manage their belongings, independently transition between activities, follow directions and follow classroom routines.

Develop New Skills

Playing with small objects (stacking, ripping, cutting with safety scissors, threading, placing small items in/taking them out of containers, twisting and turning objects) will help your child build the small muscles of their hands to support improved use of a pencil and the motor planning required to form letters and numbers on paper. These skills are important as children learn to express themselves through creating, drawing, and printing.



There is a range in ages at which children acquire, develop and master skills. If you are concerned about how your child is developing, we would suggest that you speak to your Family Doctor or Paediatrician.