

# Is Your Child Ready for Kindergarten?



# INTRODUCTION

The first 5 years of your child's life are very important to help them grow into successful, healthy adults. Children who are not ready to learn by the time they go into Kindergarten will have a harder time in school.

Getting your child ready for Kindergarten is one of the best gifts you can give them! In this booklet, we will give you all the tools, resources, and support you need to give your child a great start in life. You can also get helpful checklists to check your child's development at every stage at [www.cdc.gov/ActEarly](http://www.cdc.gov/ActEarly).

As your child grows every day, please know that we are here to help you in any way we can. If you ever have a question or need help, please call us! Our Member Services team is available Monday through Friday, 7 am – 7 pm EST at **1-800-578-0603** (TTY: 711). You can also get help 24/7 online at [www.passporthealthplan.com](http://www.passporthealthplan.com), on our Member Portal at [www.mypassporthealthplan.com](http://www.mypassporthealthplan.com), or by downloading our Mobile App, **My HealthInHand**.

# Teaching Your Child Healthy Habits

## Healthy children are more likely to be ready for school!

Your child can be healthy by making good habits and choices.

To be ready for kindergarten, your child needs to be able to:

- Run, jump, climb and do other forms of exercise to help develop large muscles
- Use pencils, crayons, scissors, paints and other activities that help develop small muscles
- Manage stress
- Keep himself or herself clean
- Get in the habit of eating nutritious foods
- Get plenty of sleep
- Get all of the required immunizations (shots) and medical exams (physical, dental, vision)



# Teaching Your Child Healthy Habits

## Let's Practice at the Grocery Store!

- Bring your child with you to the next grocery visit.
- As you walk down the aisles, point out foods that are healthy and unhealthy.
- Ask your child to draw on a sheet of paper each healthy food that you both can find. This way your child can remember these foods and start eating them!



# Teaching Your Child How to Speak and Write

Your child will need to learn how to express his or her thoughts and feelings as well as understand others.

## **To be ready for kindergarten, your child needs to be able to:**

- Speak 5 to 6 word sentences
- Sing simple songs
- Know and say simple rhymes
- Know his or her full name and be able to write it
- Know his or her home address, phone number and birthday
- Know common things like traffic signs and store logos
- Listen to and respond to stories as they are read to him or her
- Say the letters of the alphabet
- Use scribbles and drawings to express ideas



# Teaching Your Child How to Speak and Write

## Let's Practice!

- Have a “Show and Tell” night at your home. Invite family members to bring an object of their choice. For example, big brother may bring a rock he found while walking home from school or dad may bring a picture of a bird he took on his cell phone.
- Each family member takes turns talking about their object and why it's important to them.
- Teach your child to speak in complete sentences so he or she will learn how to express ideas. Over time, your child will get better and better at this.



# Teaching Your Child Self-Help Skills

**Self-help skills** such as going to the bathroom, feeding and dressing are things your child will use for the rest of their lives. These skills are also needed to get your child ready for school.

**To be ready for kindergarten, your child needs to be able to:**

- Use the toilet without help
- Fasten and unfasten his or her own clothing (zippers, shoes, jackets) without help
- Feed himself or herself using utensils
- Help put away toys or clothes
- Keep track of personal belongings
- Cover his or her mouth or nose when sneezing or coughing



# Teaching Your Child Self-Help Skills

## Practice the Power of Praise!

- Always praise your child when he or she goes to the toilet without any help.
- Keep in mind it's normal for your child to have accidents from time to time.
- Never scold your child for wetting himself or herself. This can cause more harm than good.





# Teaching Your Child Social and Emotional Skills

**Social and emotional skills** have to do with your child's ability to relate with others and talk about his or her feelings. Social and emotional skills can impact nearly all areas of learning and growth and have been tied to success in school.

**Which social and emotional skills does my child need to have? Your child needs to be able to:**

- Play and share well with other children
- Follow simple rules and routines
- Express his or her needs and wants
- Show interest and want to learn
- Explore and try new things
- Separate easily from parents and family
- Work well alone
- Do tasks and ask for help when he or she has a problem



# Teaching Your Child Social and Emotional Skills

## Let's Practice!

- Teach your child how to take turns by giving him or her chances to practice waiting. For example, play “stop and go” games at the park, with toy cars or in the pool.
- The more comfortable your child gets with waiting and self-control, the better he or she will be with taking turns.



# Teaching Your Child Math and Making it Fun!

Math skills can help your child connect ideas and understand the world around them.

**To be ready for kindergarten, your child needs to be able to:**

- Sort and classify objects
- Know basic colors
- Count from 1 to 30
- Match objects with numbers up to 10
- Know the names of basic shapes including circles, squares, triangles, rectangles
- Know the time of day such as night and day, today, yesterday and tomorrow



# Teaching Your Child Math and Making it Fun!

## Let's Practice!

- Work with your child to sort common everyday objects around your house.
- Ask your child to help sort laundry, toys and silverware.
- Sort laundry by color or type of clothing. For example, put all of the shirts in a pile, all of the matching socks in a pile or all of the blue jeans in a pile.
- Talk to your child as they sort these objects. Ask your child questions like:
  - *“How are these items alike or the same?”*
  - *“Why did you put these items in this pile and not in the other pile?”*
- Encourage your child to think of other ways to sort items you've gathered together.

