

Kindergarten Parenting Matters™



A TOOLKIT FOR PARENTS
OF KINDERGARTEN CHILDREN

Published by the Port Angeles School District
(360) 457-8575 - www.portangelesschools.org

Volume 3, Issue #1
September 2010

A Big Day

Your child's first day of kindergarten is indeed a big day! It's a big day for him and for you. It doesn't mean the end of your being his first and most important teacher. You now just have a slightly different role. Your job of teacher is now one you share with his new kindergarten teacher. But your job remains of critical importance. His new school will send him in a slightly different direction, but what you do at home remains crucial for his success. Meet his new teacher. Share your knowledge of who he is with her. Certainly find out how you can help support his learning.

When we all work together, we stand the best chance of success. We welcome him to school, but we welcome you too!



Nourish Your Child's Mind

Let your child see how curious you are about the world around you. Encourage her every effort and respect, as well as answer, hopefully her many questions. These are simple ways to nourish her love of learning and they work.

10 Ways for Parents to Help Teachers, www.pta.org

Save Time for Listening

One of the skills your child needs to develop is speaking. Save time to have him tell you about his day. If he doesn't know what to say, help by reminding him of special things to talk about. Ask him to tell people about his new dog, his new game, the song he learned today, or a book he just read. Have him show the painting he did in school today and tell everyone about it. You need to go out of your way to find the time to listen while he tells his story.



THE WAY I SEE IT

Teach your kindergartner that there are different viewpoints in every situation. Next time you read a story together, try to think of a different way to look at it than just the way it was told. If you are reading "Little Red Riding Hood," ask her to think of the story from the wolf's point of view. Maybe the wolf hadn't eaten for five days roaming in that forest and had a family of his own to feed and little red riding hood had all kinds of food in her basket, as well looking like a nice meal without having to chase rabbits around for hours.

Teaching her to look at other viewpoints will not only encourage her creativity but it may help her later in life when she is in a dispute about something and she may just remember to try to see it from another point of view.

Coloroso, B., *Kids are Worth It!*, Somerville House, 1995.



COMICS

Comic books made for young readers are a great way to teach your five-year-old early reading skills. Comics are filled with lots of small words like *I*, *and*, *or*, and *the* that she will need to learn to recognize by sight. There are lots of action words like *bam*, *kaboom* and *wham* that are easy for her to sound out and are fun to say. The amount of pictures in the comic helps her visually figure the story out as well as use the words. Ask her to predict what is going to happen by the picture before she reads the text bubble and see how close she comes to the actual script.

“Comic Genius,” *Parents*, November, 2008.

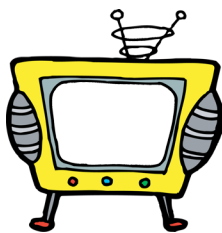
Get Moving

Get your 5-year-old moving by letting her know it is good for her. Michele Obama's campaign to try to stop childhood obesity is well worth paying attention to. It is easy to get sidetracked since most kids between the ages of 3 and 8 tend to slim down naturally. When parents see this happening, they may try to fatten their child up and therefore set the stage for their child's obesity.



One of the best ways to help your child and even yourself is to get moving. Don't let television and computers keep you or your child from getting the exercise we all need to stay healthy.

“Second Opinion: Obesity, *Newsweek*, June 28 & July 5, 2010.



TV

When your 6-year-old watches TV, try to watch with him. Discuss what you see. Ask him what he thinks about how characters act and what happens. Ask if he agrees with what happened. Make sure he is able to understand what is going on; can he tell you accurately what really happened? Is the show modeling behavior that you wouldn't mind seeing in your child? Does the show engage your child verbally or physically and use language correctly? Will this show make your child feel good? Try to limit TV use and plan with your child what shows he will watch during the week. Stick to the plan.

Healy, J., *Your Child's Growing Mind*, Doubleday, 2004.

Looks Like . . .

Lots of children reverse or invert numbers like 6 and 9 until they are about 7-years-old. Some kid's brains develop a little slower and don't have enough neurons to see the difference between the numbers. If too much pressure is put on her to “get it right” your child may just get frustrated and not want to learn about numbers at all. Games like “hidden pictures,” puzzles, mazes, making sense of mixed up dots that make pictures all help teach her to visually organize and make better sense of what she is seeing. Math and science have been defined as “a search for patterns.” Her brain is still growing!



Healy, J., *Your Child's Growing Mind*, Doubleday, 1994.

A CULTURALLY SENSITIVE PARENT

To be a culturally sensitive parent, you need to think a bit about your own cultural background and values.

Here are some questions to ask yourself:

1. Do you respect and accept other races, cultures, and languages?
2. Do you have materials and books that you read to your child about other cultures?
3. Do you talk with your child about other cultures' traditions, values, history, games, and music?
4. Do you have any friends from another culture who might help broaden what you bring to your child's life?

Bromer, J., “Cultural variations in child care: Values and actions,” *Young Children*, 1999.

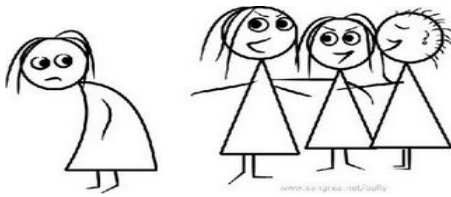


If you have any questions, call the Port Angeles School District at (360) 457-8575 or Parenting Matters at (360) 681-2250 or e-mail us at info@parentingmatters.org

Editor: Cynthia Martin, Ph.D.

Parenting Matters Foundation Is A Partner Agency of United Way of Clallam County





Girls Bully Too

While girl bullies do not typically resort to physical bullying such as hitting, they do use other ways of being mean

such as gossiping, teasing, backstabbing, ignoring and excluding, which all can have very serious effects on the victim. These types of bullying can occur as early as the toddler stage. A tearful small child may find that she is being barred from entering the playhouse by others on the inside. Parents can prevent their daughters from becoming bullies by being kind and not letting acts of unkindness or gossip go by.

Parents should also stay tuned to determine if their daughters are victims of bullying by talking to them about what makes a good friend. As they grow up, girls should be encouraged to stand up for themselves and to speak up if they see bullying happening.

“Girl Bullies: How to Help Your Daughter Not Be Bullied or Be A Bully,” *Youth Eastside Services Life Line*, Fall 2009.

Hey Dad or Mom

Help your child learn math by emptying your pockets or your purse and letting her count your change. It doesn't mean she gets to keep it all but it is a skill she really needs to master and this can help.



If you don't take the time to teach manners, who will? It takes parental expectation of be polite to encourage manners. Talk and model using “Please” and “Thank you.” Encourage him to say “May I please have the ketchup?” It is the right thing to do.

When he is interviewing for college or that important job a long time in the future, you want his manners to be just right. The way that happens is to begin today.



What Happened At School Today?

Be sure to ask your child what happened at school today. He probably won't tell unless you ask.

But do ask him how he liked it and notice if he is happy.

Ask if he met anyone.

Is he excited to go back?

Ask these questions after he has a snack and rested a bit.



Start At the Beginning

When you begin to read a book to your child, always start on page one. Read the title and the author. See if she knows what an author is. Ask questions and involve her in any way you can.

Creating a Confident Reader

Being a good reader is an important tool that children need to do well in school and even to move up in the workplace later in life. But when a child struggles with this skill they can quickly fall behind and may stay there.

What many parents don't realize is there are many simple ways to help improve virtually any child's reading ability. Studies show that parents involved in their children's learning have children with higher grades and scores, according to the National Center for Family Literacy. “Parents play a critical role in making literacy a daily habit for the family. Many of the things you do with your children as you work, play, read and talk together impact the skills your child needs” to succeed.

- Allow him to choose what he wants to read.
- Make literacy and reading portable. As you drive across town look for signs with words beginning with the same letter as your young child's name.
- Create reading rituals and get close. Read together daily. Get close. When you cuddle with your child while reading, she links reading with a sense of security.
- When reading a story, pause to talk to her about it. Ask open-ended questions, like “What do you think will happen next?” or “What would you do?”
- Keep it active. Let your child touch and hold the book. Ask her to turn the pages. And you don't always have to sit when you read or listen to a story. Try clapping out a fun rhyme or dancing to a silly poem.



“How to turn any child into a better reader,” www.holyokecenterprise.com, 2009.



Your Child's Progress

By the end of kindergarten your child should be able to do the following:

LISTENING

- ** Follow 1-2 simple directions in sequence.
- ** Listen to and understand age-appropriate stories read aloud.
- ** Follow a simple conversation.

SPEAKING

- ** Be understood by most people.
- ** Answer simple "yes/no" questions.
- ** Answer open-ended questions (e.g., "What did you have for lunch today?").
- ** Retell a story or talk about an event.
- ** Participate appropriately in conversations.
- ** Show interest in and start conversations.

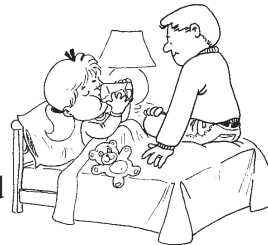
www.asha.org/public/speech/development/kindergarten.htm

A child educated only at school is an uneducated child.¹⁷

-George Santayana

TELLING STORIES

As you put your child to bed tonight, give her the first line of a story and then let her make up the rest. If she slows down, give her another line. This activity is fun and educational. It inspires her creativity and helps her learn about being a better writer.



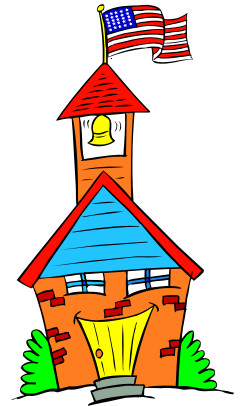
A WHOLE NEW WORLD

One of the biggest adventures of your child's life begins as she enters school. She meets new friends, has a new teacher, begins new learning skills, learns to take turns, waits patiently, shares information, and mostly blossoms. While many children have attended preschool, they may not be totally comfortable with this new school experience.

Her most serious concern is probably whether she'll have friends; it can be a big worry. "They're concerned about the same things we are," says one kindergarten teacher.

Talk about the first days of school. Listen for her worries, concerns and her happiness. Sometimes just talking about worries make them seem smaller and happiness makes it bigger.

Ames, L. B., *Your Five-Year-Old*, Dell, 1979.



Child Learn In Kindergarten?

What will My

Kindergarten is a time when your child will learn many new concepts. He will come home excited and tired from kindergarten. It is really helpful when parents know what he is learning throughout the year. This way, you can help by emphasizing some of the same things at home. Working together, we can help him more.

Over the next months we will be sharing a basic outline of what he will be learning in different areas during his kindergarten year.

To begin, let's look at 3 areas he will be learning about **READING.**

1. He is working on recognizing letters and sounds of all 52 letters in the alphabet, both upper and lower case.
2. He is learning to recognize 10 or more sight words. Sight words are frequently found words that make up 50 to 75% of all words in books, newspapers, and magazines. Many of these words cannot be sounded out so he must learn them by sight. Children who learn these words will have a fantastic base for beginning reading. Example of sight words: **a, are, do, for, go, I, me, my, no, on, one, see, the, to, we, what, and you.**
3. He is learning to put a story in order when he tells about it. Your help on these three areas really makes a difference. He sees that we all are working together.



<http://school.familyeducation.com/kindergarten/parents-and-school/38484.html>