What you do with your child ON A DAILY BASIS helps your child learn.

1. ***Allow*** your child to do things independently even if he/she takes longer than doing it yourself.
2. ***Provide*** plenty of social experiences for your child. Whether in a formal or informal playgroup, preschool, or other setting, your child will learn skills that can only be taught by other children. Sharing objects or time with an adult is different from doing so with another child. Children develop their imaginations by role-playing and pretending. Pretend play has been consistently linked to cognitive, intellectual, language, and social growth.
3. ***Provide*** daily opportunities to develop strength and coordination of large and small muscles. Go to the park, play ball games and tag, practice lacing, pour, stir, and participate in other functional activities.
4. ***Play*** games in which your child counts out loud (such as hide and seek), play board games that require your child to count the dots on a die, and use household items such as cans, boxes, and balls to explore shapes. Complete puzzles and play with interlocking building toys.
5. ***Provide*** plenty of opportunities and materials for writing and creative expression: crayons, sand, water, paint, paper, markers, scissors, hole punch, yarn, beans, and Popsicle sticks.
6. ***Read*** picture books, poetry books, nonfiction books, nonsense books, nursery rhymes, and signs. Exposure to a wide variety of literature allows your child to learn different sentence patterns and hear vocabulary that you might not ordinarily use at home.
7. ***Talk*** ***WITH*** your child. (You talk TO your child when giving directions.) ***LISTEN*** to your child's stories. ***TELL*** your child stories. ***ASK*** questions. ***SHARE*** your ideas using descriptive language. Children learn language when they ***HEAR*** it and ***USE*** it.
8. ***Visit*** your local library or bookmobile regularly.

TIPS for a successful beginning

- Find out whether your school has a kindergarten orientation or make an appointment to visit the school and teacher before the first day of school.
- Talk with your child about some of the fun things that will happen at school, like meeting new friends, listening to stories, and playing outside.
- Begin a healthy routine by making sure that your child sleeps at least 10–12 hours and eats a nutritious breakfast.
- Have your child tell you the plan for after school—exactly where to be picked up or which bus to take.
- Label all outerwear.
- Dress your child in clothes that can be put on and taken off independently, such as elastic-waist pants and shoes with Velcro closures.
- Dress your child in clothing that is appropriate for sitting on carpets and outdoor play.
- Pack a "reassurance" such as a family picture, a small stuffed animal, or a note from home in your child's backpack.
- Don't over-schedule after-school activities; your child will likely be tired.
- Check your child's backpack. There may be several forms for you to fill out and return.
- Celebrate the end of the first day.
- Begin your after-school routine, which may include a snack, playtime, and quiet book time.
- Ask your child specific questions about the day such as: "Who did you play with? What was today's story about? Where did you play? What did you make?"

KINDERGARTEN here we come!

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Is your child ready for KINDERGARTEN?

The items in this pamphlet are provided **AS A GUIDE** to support your child's learning before entering kindergarten. However, children grow, develop, and learn at different rates. Your child may already be successful with some items and may need more time to develop others. Give your child plenty of opportunities to practice and learn these skills. With guidance, they can be learned interactively with family and friends in a natural setting.

SELF-HELP SKILLS

- Eats independently.
- Uses restroom independently.
- Washes hands after using the restroom.
- Removes outerwear independently.
- Asks questions and seeks out adult help when necessary.
- Knows how to care for and use books.
- Cleans up after self.

SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL SKILLS

- Tries new things.
- Takes turns.
- Shares materials.
- Listens while others talk.
- Shows concern for others.
- Plays cooperatively with other children.
- Works well independently or in small groups.
- Separates from parent without undue anxiety.
- Knows parent or guardian's first and last names.
- Knows own first and last names and can tell an adult.

LARGE MOTOR SKILLS

- Hops, jumps, and runs.
- Bounces, catches, kicks, and throws balls.
- Walks in a straight line forward and backward.
- Balances on dominant foot for five seconds.
- Participates in simple games.

SMALL MOTOR SKILLS

- Holds writing instruments correctly.
- Holds scissors correctly.
- Uses scissors to cut straight or curved lines.
- Turns a single page in a book.
- Puts together simple puzzles.

MATH SKILLS

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- Counts to ten.
- Creates groups of up to five objects.
- Places like items together—red cars and blue cars.
- Plays with, identifies, and names the shapes (e.g., circle, triangle, and rectangle).
- Uses comparative words (e.g., heavier, shorter, less, taller, bigger).

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY SKILLS

- Listens attentively and responds to stories and books.
- Speaks in complete sentences.
- Speaks clearly enough to be understood by unfamiliar adults.
- Has a vocabulary that includes words to name colors, parts of the body, and positional words (e.g., in/out, to/from, around, upside-down).
- Expresses feelings and ideas.
- Knows poems and songs.
- Identifies signs, symbols, or logos in the environment.
- Identifies 10 or more letters of the alphabet, including those in own name.
- Writes using drawings and made-up or real letters.

KINDERGARTEN ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

1. Your child must be five years old before September 2 of the enrolling year.
2. You must provide:
   - An official birth certificate.
   - An immunization record or exemption form.
   - A vision screening certificate.
3. Some school districts require a record of a recent health examination. Check with your local school to find out what it requires in the health examination and whether it offers a kindergarten vision screening.

HELPFUL RESOURCES

If you are concerned about your child's development, contact **your local school district**. Every district actively seeks out and serves children with special needs. For additional resources and information go to **www.schools.utah.gov** and access Special Education.

For information regarding licensed child care, contact **www.jobs.utah.gov/occ.**

Head Start serves the child development needs of preschool children (birth through age five) and their low-income families. For further information, contact Head Start Collaboration Office at (801) 468-0026.

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