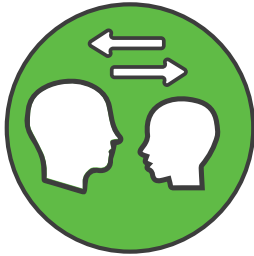
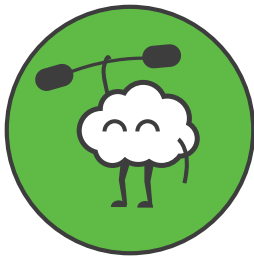


Many schools focus on children's ability to name letters, hold a pencil, and count to ten as the only indicators of "school readiness," but research shows that children through age 8 need other skills to succeed both in school and in life. It is never too early or late to develop these skills! Below are some examples of how adults can help:



### Talk and Play

- Talk to your baby and ask questions, even if they cannot answer verbally yet.
- Narrate what is happening to help children build a strong vocabulary. You might say, "Look, we're passing the post office. What a long line of people are waiting!"



### Body and Brain

- Consistent routines help children know what to expect each day. Try following nap time with snack time every day, eating lunch around the same time, or creating a set bed time.
- Take naps and practice deep breaths or yoga together! These activities can relieve stress for children and for you.



### Science and Math

- When playing, use words like "above-below," "small-big," and "less-more" to compare objects.
- Let babies play outside. Natural materials stimulate connections in the developing brain more than man-made materials. Help them grasp a stick, scoop the sand, or feel the breeze.

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## Talk and Play

- Next time you read with children, look at the pictures, point things out, and ask questions. *"Look at the mouse. They have a HUGE piece of cheese. Do you think they can eat the whole thing?"*
- Very young children need help understanding that other's thoughts/feelings differ from theirs. Try having conversations about the thoughts/feelings of puppets, dolls, or book characters.



## Body and Brain

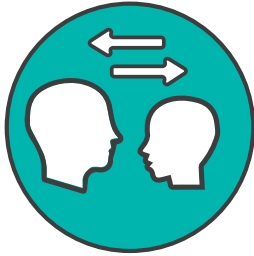
- Giving children choices helps them develop independence, planning skills, and confidence. Give them two choices (that are both OK with you!) for what to eat or what to wear, then let them decide.
- Give young children one clear direction at a time. With a 2-year-old, you might say, *"Please go get your green jacket."*



## Science and Math

- Encourage curiosity with hands-on activities like ripping tape, collecting rocks, or creating with clay.
- Practice sorting things (e.g., books, socks, toys) by color. Then count and compare how many are in each group: *"How many blue socks are there? How many red socks are there? Which group has more (or less)?"*

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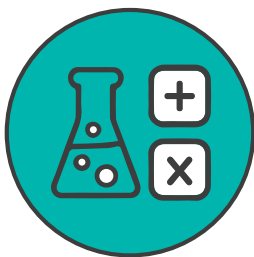
## Talk and Play

- At bedtime, make up a story with your children! Start with a few sentences, then have children add the next few. Go back and forth until someone says, "the end." Make it fun with some surprising plot twists!
- Children who are helpful and cooperative often do better in school, so ask for their help! "Can you help me get ready for dinner by getting four forks and cups? Thanks — it's great to have your help!"



## Body and Brain

- Help children feel safe when life brings change. Show extra love and confidence in their resilience.
- Unstructured play time (when kids make the decisions about what to do) has been shown to help develop independent thinking and planning skills.



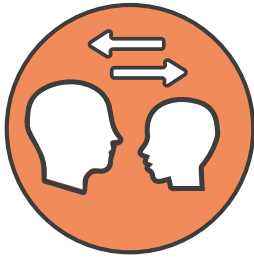
## Science and Math

- Asking children to explain how things work helps them develop science thinking skills. "Why won't your balloon float anymore? How do the brakes on your bike stop the wheels from spinning?"
- Counting on fingers helps children build strong math skills! Encourage children to use their fingers for adding and subtracting.

# School Readiness Tips

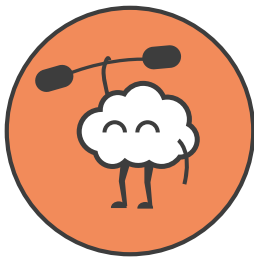
## Early Elementary

Many schools focus on children's ability to name letters, hold a pencil, and count to ten as the only indicators of "school readiness," but research shows that children through age 8 need other skills to succeed both in school and in life. It is never too early or late to develop these skills! Below are some examples of how adults can help:



### Talk and Play

- See conflict as a learning opportunity. Ask children their ideas for solving the problem.
- Encourage children to ask lots of questions. Don't worry if you don't know the answers. You can say, *"That's a great question. I don't know. How could we find out?"*



### Body and Brain

- Help children make to-do lists. Have them check off items as they complete them.
- Give children a chance to evaluate their own work to build their sense of confidence and independence. *"How do you think you did? What was the hardest part for you? Which part did you do really well?"*



### Science and Math

- Take apart old appliances or toys (with supervision) and explore how each part works.
- In school, math is taught with a focus on complex/flexible thinking. Support this by asking math questions with more than one answer. Instead of asking *"what is 8 + 7?"* try, *"how many ways can you make the number 15?"*

