

A BOOKLET FOR PARENTS

Learning to Play and Playing to Learn: What Families Can Do



best start
meilleur départ

by/par health **nexus** santé

What is this booklet about?

Learning to play and playing to learn is a parent resource. It is based on the research of what, how, and when your child learns. This booklet is filled with:

- up-to-date information
- helpful tips
- checklists
- links to other resources.

All this helps your child to grow and develop in the best way. This will help your child be prepared for learning at school.

Who is this booklet for?

This booklet is for everyone who cares for children.

- ✓ Parents
- ✓ Grandparents
- ✓ Guardians
- ✓ Child care providers
- ✓ Health care providers
- ✓ Family
- ✓ Friends

Note: We use the term 'parent' in this resource to represent all significant care providers in your child's life. We use 'he' in one section and 'she' in the following section when we are talking about a child. You may not be familiar with all the words and concepts used in this booklet. The glossary at the end explains many of them.



What does this booklet help parents to learn?

The information and examples in this booklet show you how you can help your child's brain and body grow and thrive. It will also help you feel more confident that your child is prepared for Kindergarten and beyond.

Some children learn in different ways or may have special needs. Consider the unique strengths and needs of your own child. The tips, activities and links in this booklet can help you to decide the best way to support your child.

Did you know?

You are your child's greatest teacher and role model.

Table of Contents

The journey to school and lifelong learning	2	How can I know how my child is doing? ...	15
What does a Kindergarten day look like?.....	3	Checklists and quizzes.....	15
How do children learn?	4	Growth and development checklists	16
Why is a secure attachment important for learning?	4	School related nutrition information.....	24
How can I help my child develop a secure attachment?	5	Vision checklist and information	25
Why is self-regulation important for learning?	6	My child's smile – a dental checklist	26
Why is play important for learning?	10	Immunization information	27
Physically active play	11	Routines and self-help checklist	28
How can I play with my child?	12	Parent quiz	29
How can I help my child be prepared for learning at school?	14	Resources for families	30
		Glossary	32
		Acknowledgements.....	33



The journey to school and lifelong learning



Through play, children learn many skills, such as how to interact with others, solve problems and accept different ways of thinking, long before they start school or even Kindergarten. These skills help children do well in school and in life. Children, who feel good about learning and are eager, curious, and confident when starting school, are more likely to:

- do well in school
- finish school
- continue on a journey of lifelong learning.

Starting school is a big milestone for you and your child. Kindergarten is the first step in your child's learning journey. It is optional, and free for all children in Ontario.

Kindergarten is a play-based program that helps children learn:

- through play that is at the right level for your child's age and development.
- through inquiry. This means children's questions and wonderings will be explored and investigated.
- with the support of the Kindergarten team.

Many children in Ontario will have a full-day of learning when they start Kindergarten. For more information about full-day early learning, go to the Ministry of Education website at: www.edu.gov.on.ca/earlylearning



Note: In this booklet we have referred to the **Kindergarten team**. When your child goes to school he will either have a Kindergarten teacher or a full-day Kindergarten team made up of a teacher and an Early Childhood Educator.



What does a Kindergarten day look like?

When children are learning in Kindergarten you will see them:



Listening to stories



Learning through play



Solving problems and telling others about their learning



Developing skills and concepts, both indoors and outdoors



Having a quiet time as needed



Eating meals and snacks



Making friends



Learning to get along with other children and adults

How do children learn?

From the day they are born, children learn and develop by:

- touching
- seeing
- hearing
- smelling
- tasting
- moving
- doing (for example, playing).

Children's early development and later health and learning is shaped by the day-to-day experiences within their family and community. Children learn by playing in places where they feel safe, respected, and loved. Children's play is children's work. Remember, you are your child's greatest teacher and role model!

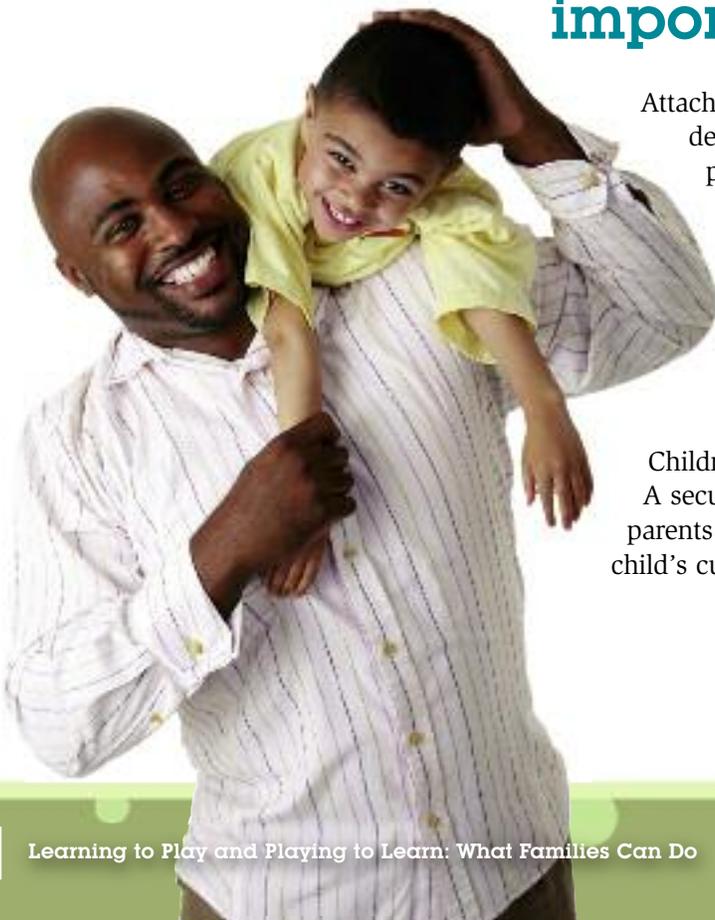
Some things that help children be prepared to learn are:

- a secure attachment
- self-regulation
- play (yes, you may be surprised to hear that play is included!).

Let's find out why these concepts are so important.



Why is a secure attachment important for learning?



Attachment is a powerful, emotional relationship that develops between children and the important people in their lives. Parents can do many things to help their child develop a secure attachment. Two key ingredients are:

1. Parents protect children during times of stress and danger.
2. Parents encourage children to explore the world around them when it is safe.

Children form either secure or insecure attachments. A secure attachment is more likely to develop when parents respond warmly and consistently to their child's cues and their child's needs.

How can I help my child develop a secure attachment?

Here are some things parents can do that help develop a secure attachment.

- Pick up your baby when she cries.
- Comfort your child when she is hurt, sad, or frightened.
- Support your child's learning by playing with her when she is learning a new skill and/or practicing skills she already has.
- Show and tell your child you are delighted to see her each time you pick her up from school or child care, when she wakes up in the morning, or at every other opportunity.
- Every child is unique. The most important thing is to know your child and respond in the way she enjoys.

A secure attachment helps your child:

- grow and develop in a healthy way
- feel safe to explore the world around her through play
- think and feel more positively
- develop into a confident and curious learner
- get along well with others
- feel empathy for others
- have a good self-image, lots of self-confidence, and good self-regulation.



Why is self-regulation important for learning?

Self-regulation is a skill that we learn throughout life. The foundations are set in the early years. Self-regulation develops when caring adults respond sensitively to a child. A secure attachment promotes good self-regulation in the child.

Self-regulation looks and sounds like:

- staying calmly focused and alert or shifting attention when needed
- developing control of one's feelings and impulses
- developing the ability to tolerate frustration and resist doing something tempting (e.g., taking someone's toy)
- understanding how to behave in different situations (e.g., screaming with joy while running outside, then sitting quietly to listen to a story)
- using information to plan, solve problems, and complete tasks (e.g., figure out how to make a tower balance or fit pieces of a puzzle).

Examples for 0 – 1 year-olds:

Of course, children cannot do all this when they are born. Parents help their babies and children regulate their emotions, attention, and behaviour by responding to their cues. Cues are signals your baby or child gives through facial expressions, body language, sounds, and crying. When you read these signals and respond to them consistently, your child will begin to learn to regulate his emotions, attention, and behaviour.

- *The baby pulls his hands to his face or tries to suck on things that touch his cheeks. This shows that he is hungry. You respond by feeding him.*



- *The baby is smiling at the parent playing with her. This shows that she is still interested in the game they are playing. You continue the game as long as the baby smiles and looks at you.*

Examples for 1 – 2 year-olds:

Toddlers still need a lot of help to regulate emotions, attention, and behaviour. Toddlers begin to read the cues from parents and respond to them.



- *Parents may help their toddler who has to wait in line for his turn, by giving an explanation ahead of time, such as, “Your turn comes after Jake’s. Everyone gets a turn.”*

- *A toddler may show a toy or book to her parents. When you show interest and look at the book with her, you encourage the toddler’s attention. In fact, looking at the same page at the same time and shifting attention from page to page is an important experience for later development. It supports your child’s ability to focus when she learns to read.*



Examples for 2 – 5 year-olds:

Preschoolers begin to self-regulate their emotions, behaviour, and attention. They still need help from adults, but begin to read the cues given by others that tell them to take turns, share, wait, be friendly, calm down, focus, complete tasks, and work hard at play.



- *A preschooler is showing signs that she is getting frustrated because the puzzle she is working on is hard. You encourage her with a few words such as, “See if this piece fits, if you turn it the other way.” She will feel happy and proud when the puzzle is finished and will stay focused on what she is doing the next time.*
- *A preschooler is telling a story about his day at preschool. Even though you are busy, you ask him questions about his day and listen carefully to what he has to share.*



Here are some tips that help children develop self-regulation.

- Allow your child to make choices (e.g, set out two healthy snacks and let your child choose which one he wants).
- Provide a routine so your child knows what happens next.
- Model self-control and self-regulation and talk to your child about them (e.g, "I am upset right now because you spilled your drink, but I am not getting angry. I am counting to ten to help myself stay calm.").

Children with good self-regulation are able to:

- Follow directions more easily
- Communicate their needs more appropriately
- Solve problems and complete tasks more easily
- Use information from previous experiences
- Get along well with others.

These skills help children when they start school.

How does a child develop self-regulation?

Children learn to develop self-regulation through the loving and consistent responses from parents and lots of practice through play!



Why is play important for learning?

Play is the true work of a child. Children are busy when they are playing, and they are learning when they play. For example, when children are lifting, dropping, looking, pouring, bouncing, hiding, building, knocking down, climbing, running, and role playing they are learning.

Your child is learning important skills and concepts through play. Here are some examples:

- making and sharing observations about what happens when objects are put in water (science concept; e.g., the property of objects)
- dividing toys or treats evenly, or what is bigger than, smaller than, more than or less than (mathematical concepts)
- finding familiar words in signs, retelling stories or printing a list (literacy skills)
- getting along with others, making friends and being respectful (social and emotional skills and concepts)
- using thinking skills such as how to recognize and solve problems (inquiry skills)
- walking, running, hopping, balancing, throwing and catching (large and small muscle development, eye-hand coordination skills)

Role playing is really important for your child. When children role play, they practice real life situations. Research shows that children who role play:

- have greater language skills
- have better social skills
- have more imagination
- are more likely to be kind to others
- are less aggressive
- show higher levels of thinking and problem solving
- develop better self-regulation.

Role play is an activity that you and your child can do together. For example, you can:

- act out a story you have read together
- have a tea party with dolls and teddy bears
- pretend to be a horse and rider.

Younger children play better side by side than together. They often want exactly what the other child is playing with. Preschoolers begin to play together, but don't always cooperate. If you have more than one child, help them develop rules that will work for everyone. For example, if they want a toy another child is playing with:

- They need to give the other child another toy in exchange.
- They can each take turns and have the toy for a few minutes.



Physically active play



Healthy habits start earlier than you think. Healthy active living is a wise habit to encourage. Physical activity is part of healthy active living.

Being physically active is fun. It also has lots of benefits. Being physically active helps:

- build strong muscles and bones
- develop and grow in the healthy way (e.g., helps prevent obesity)
- children play with others and develop self-esteem.

At the same time, children learn a lot of skills such as:

- eye-hand coordination (e.g., climbing a play structure)
- large muscle skills (e.g., running)
- small muscle skills (e.g., picking up a small ball or doing up shoes)

Children aged 2 to 5 years should engage in physically active play for at least three hours every day.

Physically active play can happen during the day as part of play, games, transportation (e.g., walking), or a family activity such as swimming or skating. Your child learns from you. Remember you are her greatest teacher and role model. If you are active, she will also be active.

Some examples of how you can include physically active play both indoors and out include:

- Put on some music and dance or move around.
- Create an obstacle course and crawl under, climb over, or move around the obstacles.
- Go for a walk around your neighbourhood (this also helps your child become familiar with the school and the way to school).
- Roll, throw, catch, and kick balls and other objects of different sizes.
- Go skating or swimming.
- Visit the park or playground.

So, go play with your child! You are your child's favourite toy. There is nothing in the world your child would rather do than play with you!



How can I play with my child?

Different adults play differently with their children. You may prefer to play active games while your partner likes to play games with rules. You may like to read to your child while your partner tells stories and acts them out. That is okay. Children need more than one adult in their lives. Parents, family members, and other caregivers all provide different opportunities for your child to play, explore, and learn.

Encourage other family members and care providers to play with your child. Just set some clear safety rules for everyone. It also helps, if everyone knows the developmental stage of your child and can play with him according to his age and ability (check out the Nipissing District Developmental Screens on pages 16, 18, 20 and 22).

Tips that help you play with your child:

- Try to respond when your child initiates play.
- Actively listen to your child while he is playing.
- Then enter into the play with your child and talk about his play. Talk with him in your native language or the language you are most comfortable with. Asking questions about his play will name the things he is playing with and help him learn to self-reflect and use his thinking skills. For example:
 - How do the cars get into the garage?
 - Where do I find the plates for dinner?
 - Why did you put these things (name them) on the menu?
 - Who takes care of the pets when your store is closed?
- Decide with your child what should be in his play area. For example:
 - materials that encourage pretend play, such as a variety of items for “dress up”, stuffed animals and dolls, toy cash register, a variety of toy vehicles, empty food boxes and jars, play money, etc.
 - paper, pencils and crayons to help your child develop communication skills
 - a variety of containers and measuring tools, such as rulers, measuring tapes and simple timers to stimulate his interest in mathematical and scientific concepts.





- Read stories with your child, then re-tell them or act them out.
- Use music to move and dance with your child, or to help him become quiet.
- Take your child out for a walk around your neighbourhood or a hike through the park.
- Talk about the things you have seen together (e.g., "I noticed the birds have built a nest in that tree. I wonder what is inside?").
- Pretend play what you have done together (e.g., going to the grocery store).
- Develop a routine so your child has a time for active play and a time for quiet play.
- Let your child help you with simple chores and talk about them.
- Bake, cook and prepare food with your child.

Provide opportunities for your child to use all his developing skills:

- *large muscle skills* – e.g., running, climbing, pulling, pushing
- *small muscle skills* – e.g., drawing, painting, catching
- *social skills* – e.g., turn taking, sharing, cooperating, initiating
- *emotional skills* – e.g., showing feelings, caring
- *language skills* – e.g., listening, talking, asking using words, rhyming, singing, telling stories
- *thinking skills* – e.g., exploring, investigating, planning, matching, problem-solving.

How can I help my child be prepared for learning at school



Seven very important ingredients for learning are:

1. Lots of love

Providing your child with lots of love and responding warmly to her cues leads to a secure attachment. Read more about attachment on page 4.

2. Talking and listening

Your child learns when you talk with her. Singing, rhyming and reading also build her skills. Even before she can speak, she can tell you things through signals or cues. Respond to her and listen to her when she speaks and she will learn how to communicate with you and others. Check your child's speech and language development using the growth and development checklists on pages 16, 18, 20 and 22.

3. Play, play, and more play

Different types of play help your child grow and develop. Spend time playing with your child. That is what she likes best. You can also take her to play groups and Ontario Early Years Centres to help your child get used to playing with other children. Read more about play on page 10.

4. Daily physical activity

Provide opportunities for lots of physically active play to help your child develop skills and strong muscles and bones. Read more on page 11.

5. Good nutrition

Good nutrition gives your child the building blocks to grow, have enough energy to learn, and stay healthy. To learn more about your child's nutrition and school, see page 24.

6. Daily routines

It helps your child if she has routines for getting up, eating, going to bed, active play, and quiet play. It makes your child feel secure and avoids difficult behaviour. Sometimes the classroom or the school routines need to be adjusted to accommodate a child who has a special need. Don't forget to include special events, such as birthday parties, outings, or cultural celebrations. To find out more about routines for starting school, go to the Routines and self-help quiz on page 28.

7. Regular health and development check-ups

Your child learns better when she feels well and can hear and see well. Health checks and immunizations help keep your child healthy. Any health problem your child may have, should be addressed early, so that she can do well in school. To find out more about your child's health, go to the checklists, quizzes and information on pages 16 – 29.

You also help your child learn when you talk with her about school and communicate with her Kindergarten team.

How can I know how my child is doing?

All parents want their children to do the best they can in school and in life. The Nipissing District Developmental Screen is an easy-to-use tool to help you track how your child is developing according to his or her age. There are several screens for various ages. The screen asks if your child can do certain things at a certain age in the areas of:

- vision
- hearing
- speech and language
- large muscles
- small muscles
- thinking and learning
- social
- emotional
- self-help



You can find the screens in the next section under NDDS® *Growth and development checklist for 2, 3, 4 and 5 year-olds*.

Checklists, quizzes & more information

Here are a number of checklists and quizzes that can help you track how your child is doing.

- NDDS® Growth and development checklist for 2, 3, 4 and 5 year-olds
- School related nutrition information
- Vision checklist
- Your child's smile – A dental checklist
- Immunization information
- Routines and self-help checklist
- Parent quiz

If you have concerns about how your child is doing contact:

- Your family doctor, nurse practitioner or pediatrician
- Your local public health unit
- Your community health centre
- Your local infant and child development services. For information about infant and child development services and to find a centre near you, go to www.oaicd.ca.

Age 2 – Nipissing District Developmental Screen

Child's Name: _____

Birth Date: _____ Today's Date: _____

The Nipissing District Developmental Screen is a checklist designed to help monitor your child's development.

✓ ✓
Yes No

By **TWO YEARS** of age, does your child...

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	1. Understand one and two step directions? <i>("close the door", "go find your book and show it to grandma")*</i>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	2. Ask for help using words?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	3. Learn and use one or more new words a week? <i>(may only be understood by family)</i>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	4. Join two words together? <i>("want cookie", "car go", "my hat")*</i>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	5. Eat most foods without coughing and choking?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	6. Eat with a utensil with little spilling?***
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	7. Take off own shoes, socks, or hat?***
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	8. Try to run?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	9. Play in a squat position?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	10. Walk backwards or sideways pulling a toy?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	11. Make scribbles and dots on paper or in sand?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	12. Put objects into a small container?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	13. Like to watch and play near other children?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	14. Say "no", and like to do some things without help?***
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	15. Use toys for pretend play? <i>(give doll a drink)*</i>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	16. Use skills already learned and develop new ones? <i>(no loss of skills)</i>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	17. Copy your actions? <i>(you clap your hands and he/she claps hands)*</i>



Note: It is recommended that all children by this age have a vision, hearing and dental checkup. Ask your family doctor or public health unit where these services are available in your community.

If you answer "no" to any question or have any concerns about your child's development, follow-up with your health care and/or child care professional

* Examples provided are only suggestions. You may use similar examples from your family experience. ** Item may not be common to all cultures.

Format adapted with permission by:

ndds.ca

nipissing district developmental screen®

Nipissing District Developmental Screen

© 2011 Nipissing District Developmental Screen

Intellectual Property Association. All rights reserved.

Age 2 – Activities for your child...

 Emotional

 Fine Motor

 Gross Motor

 Social

 Self-Help

 Communicator

 Learning/Thinking

The following activities for your child will help you play your part in your child's development.



I am learning about my feelings. Give me words for my feelings and show that you understand.



I want to become independent. Encourage me to get dressed and undressed, do household tasks, turn lights on and off, and open and close doors.



Let me open and close plastic containers by twisting and turning the lids. Help me find the right lid to put on each container.

I love to pour water from containers during my bath. I enjoy stringing beads or buttons on a shoelace, string, or pipe cleaner. Talk to me about the colour and count the beads as I lace them. Remember, I may still put things in my mouth, so watch me.



Sing songs with me throughout the day and repeat them often. This helps me learn to sing them on my own. Leave out parts of the song or rhyme for me to finish.

Help me learn new words. Talk to me during bathing, feeding, dressing, and doing daily chores. Name my clothing and body parts. Let me help set the table, sort the laundry, and put groceries away.



Provide me with toys that allow me to push or pedal with my feet. This will help me learn to climb on and off and to pedal. Make sure I have lots of room. Praise my efforts.

Let's practice climbing and jumping. I love to get in and out of a box or jump from a bottom step. We can have fun together.

Let's sing *Old MacDonald* and move our bodies like the animals: hop like a frog or bunny, squat or waddle like a duck, or jump up and down like a kangaroo.



I like to play sorting games with you. We can sort objects by shape, touch, colour, and size. Use spoons, blocks, toys, and clothing.

I am learning to make decisions; offer me choices throughout the day.

I may get ear infections. Talk to my doctor about signs and symptoms.



Let's play a game. Use two shoeboxes and two toys. We each get a box and a toy. Let's take turns putting our toy in, over, under, behind, and on the box. Talk to me about what we are doing.

If you answer "no" to any question or have any concerns about your child's development, follow-up with your health care and/or child care professional

Age 3 – Nipissing District Developmental Screen

Child's Name: _____

Birth Date: _____ Today's Date: _____

The Nipissing District Developmental Screen is a checklist designed to help monitor your child's development.

✓ ✓
Yes No By **THREE YEARS** of age, does your child...

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	1. Speak clearly enough to be understood all of the time by family?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	2. Understand two and three step directions? (<i>"pick up your hat and shoes and put them in the closet"</i>)*
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	3. Speak in sentences of five or more words? (<i>"I go home and play"</i>)
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	4. Understand and use some describing words? (<i>big, dirty, wet, hot</i>)
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	5. Walk up the stairs using the handrail?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	6. Stand on one foot briefly?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	7. Throw a ball forward at least one metre (three feet)?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	8. Twist lids off jars or turn knobs?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	9. Turn the pages of a book one at a time?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	10. Play make-believe games with actions and words? (<i>pretend to cook a meal, fix a car</i>)*
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	11. Dress or undress with help?***
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	12. Share some of the time? (<i>toys, books</i>)*
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	13. Show affection with words and actions?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	14. Play with others comfortably?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	15. Co-operate with parent's request half of the time?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	16. Listen to music or stories for 5-10 minutes with you?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	17. Greet friends and familiar adults when reminded?



Note: It is recommended that all children by this age have a vision, hearing and dental checkup. Ask your family doctor or public health unit where these services are available in your community.

If you answer "no" to any question or have any concerns about your child's development, follow-up with your health care and/or child care professional

* Examples provided are only suggestions. You may use similar examples from your family experience. ** Item may not be common to all cultures.

Format adapted with permission by:

ndds.ca

nipissing district developmental screen®

Nipissing District Developmental Screen

© 2011 Nipissing District Developmental Screen

Intellectual Property Association. All rights reserved.

Age 3 – Activities for your child...

 Emotional

 Fine Motor

 Gross Motor

 Social

 Self-Help

 Communication

 Learning/Thinking

The following activities for your child will help you play your part in your child's development.



I may be afraid of things that didn't bother me before. My fears are real to me so help me to feel safe.



Encourage me to create with puzzles, play dough, nesting toys, peg boards, beads, and building blocks.

I like activities that let me practise cutting, gluing, painting, and drawing



We can play by making a line on the floor with a rope or masking tape. We can lie, stand, walk, run, gallop on, or jump over the line.

Let's play ball! Encourage me to throw and catch a ball, hit a ball with a bat or racquet, or kick a ball at a target. We can hold a beach ball between us using different parts of our bodies (elbows, legs, hands, knees, feet).



I like to play with other children but sometimes I need help to take turns, share, and cooperate.

We can be whomever we want or do whatever we want when we play make believe. Let's pretend to go camping, play astronaut, firefighter, or dancer.



Encourage me to do things by myself to help me become independent. It is important for me to be able to get dressed and undressed, wash myself, and help to clean up. I'm learning about responsibility.



Books are some of my favourite things. Read to me often throughout the day. Make it part of our daily routine by setting aside a special time. Choose books that are colourful and interesting to me.

I enjoy guessing games. Place some familiar objects on the table, and we can take turns describing them. For example "Show me something we use to brush our hair". Sometimes make it silly so we can laugh.



Silly games make me laugh. Make cards using simple magazine pictures. Add something that does not belong like a girl with a moustache or a fish with legs. Giggle with me as we talk about what's funny.

I like sorting objects. Give me an empty egg carton where I can put different objects into the cups. Things like buttons, different coloured objects, shapes, and rocks are fun to sort.

I enjoy surprises. Let's hide different objects in a box or bag for a game of touch and tell. We can take turns feeling the objects and describing what's in the bag. Pull them out to see if we were right.

I have lots of energy and need space to run, climb, pull a wagon, and ride a tricycle.

All children my age should have a vision, hearing, and dental checkup. Ask our family doctor or public health unit where these services are available in our community.

If you answer "no" to any question or have any concerns about your child's development, follow-up with your health care and/or child care professional

Age 4 – Nipissing District Developmental Screen

Child's Name: _____

Birth Date: _____ Today's Date: _____

The Nipissing District Developmental Screen is a checklist designed to help monitor your child's development.

✓ ✓
Yes No

By **FOUR YEARS** of age, does your child...

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	1. Understand three-part related directions and longer sentences? (<i>"put your toys away and wash your hands before lunch"</i>)*
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	2. Say rhymes (cat-bat-hat) or sing children's songs?*
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	3. Ask and answer a lot of questions? (<i>"why?"</i> , <i>"what are you doing?"</i>)*
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	4. Speak clearly enough to be understood most of the time without repeating or stuttering on sounds or words?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	5. Tell stories with a clear beginning, middle, and end?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	6. Show you four colours when asked? (<i>"show me the red crayon"</i>)*
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	7. Tell what is happening in a picture when you ask?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	8. Go up and down stairs alternating feet? (<i>with one foot on each step</i>)
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	9. Stand on one foot for one to three seconds without support?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	10. Try to hop on one foot?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	11. Catch a large ball with outstretched arms?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	12. Snip paper with scissors?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	13. Draw a person with three or more body parts?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	14. Hold a crayon or pencil correctly?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	15. Undo buttons and zippers?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	16. Use the toilet/potty during the day? (<i>toilet trained</i>)
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	17. Take turns and share with other children in small group activities?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	18. Try to comfort someone who is upset?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	19. Play near and talk to other children while continuing with own activity?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	20. Look for adult approval? (<i>"watch me"</i> or <i>"look what I did"</i>)*



Note: It is recommended that all children by this age have a vision, hearing and dental checkup. Ask your family doctor or public health unit where these services are available in your community.

If you answer "no" to any question or have any concerns about your child's development, follow-up with your health care and/or child care professional

* Examples provided are only suggestions. You may use similar examples from your family experience. ** Item may not be common to all cultures.

Format adapted with permission by:

ndds.ca

nipissing district developmental screen®

Nipissing District Developmental Screen

© 2011 Nipissing District Developmental Screen

Intellectual Property Association. All rights reserved.

Age 4 – Activities for your child...

 Emotional

 Fine Motor

 Gross Motor

 Social

 Self-Help

 Communicator

 Learning/Thinking

The following activities for your child will help you play your part in your child's development.



I need to be heard to know that I am special. Listen when I talk to you.

I'm never too old or big to be hugged so please do it often.



I need opportunities to play with other children. If I'm not in school, I need to be involved in group activities on a regular basis.



I like activities that let me practise cutting, gluing, painting, drawing, dot-to-dot, simple mazes, and puzzles. Soon I may be able to print letters, numbers, and my name.

I want to practise my lacing skills. Encourage me to thread a shoelace through the holes in my shoes or holes punched around a picture. I am getting better at doing buttons and zippers, but I still need practice.



I can now tell longer stories. Show me a series of pictures and tell me a story about them. After I know it well, have me put the pictures in order. I can retell the story or make up one of my own.

I am learning about words and sounds. Play rhyming games and laugh at the silly words we can make together. Point out the sounds and letters in my world.



I want to show you what I can do. Set up an obstacle course so I can practise many skills: walking, running, crawling, balancing, climbing, jumping over things, and hopping (on one foot or both feet).

I enjoy ball games. I want to learn to use a bat, racquet, hockey stick, golf club, ball glove. I like to play with you or a friend.



Let's play a memory game. We can take turns giving each other directions ("Put your hands on your head, then turn around, then touch the ground").

It's important for me to know my full name, address, and telephone number.



I like it when you read to me. Storybooks are more exciting for me when you change your voice for different parts. Take me to the library.

I can play group games with simple rules: *Duck Duck Goose*, *Ring Around the Rosie*, *London Bridge is Falling Down* and *The Farmer in the Dell*.

I learn best by playing and using my imagination. Please limit and monitor my video game, computer, and TV time.

All children my age should have a vision, hearing, and dental checkup. Ask our family doctor or public health unit where these services are available in our community.

If you answer "no" to any question or have any concerns about your child's development, follow-up with your health care and/or child care professional

Age 5 – Nipissing District Developmental Screen

Child's Name: _____

Birth Date: _____ Today's Date: _____

The Nipissing District Developmental Screen is a checklist designed to help monitor your child's development.

✓ ✓
Yes No | By **FIVE YEARS** of age, does your child...

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	1. Count out loud or on fingers to answer "How many are there"?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	2. Know common shapes and most of the letters of the alphabet?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	3. Speak clearly in adult-like sentences most of the time?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	4. Tell long stories about own past experiences?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	5. Use sentences to describe objects and events?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	6. Walk on a straight line only stepping off once or twice?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	7. Stop, start, and change direction smoothly when running?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	8. Throw and catch a ball successfully most of the time?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	9. Climb playground equipment without difficulty?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	10. Hop on one foot several times?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	11. Hold a crayon or pencil correctly?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	12. Draw lines, simple shapes, and a few letters? **
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	13. Use scissors to cut along a thick line drawn on a piece of paper?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	14. Dress and undress with little help? **
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	15. Usually play well in groups?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	16. Cooperate with adult requests most of the time?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	17. Talk about having a best friend?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	18. Share willingly with others?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	19. Work alone at an activity for 20-30 minutes?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	20. Separate easily from you?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	21. Play make-believe games with others?
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	22. Respond verbally to "Hi" and "How are you"?



Note: It is recommended that all children by this age have a vision, hearing and dental checkup. Ask your family doctor or public health unit where these services are available in your community.

If you answer "no" to any question or have any concerns about your child's development, follow-up with your health care and/or child care professional

* Examples provided are only suggestions. You may use similar examples from your family experience. ** Item may not be common to all cultures.

Format adapted with permission by:

ndds.ca

nipissing district developmental screen®

Nipissing District Developmental Screen

© 2011 Nipissing District Developmental Screen

Intellectual Property Association. All rights reserved.

Age 5 – Activities for your child...

 Emotional

 Fine Motor

 Gross Motor

 Social

 Self-Help

 Communication

 Learning/Thinking

The following activities for your child will help you play your part in your child's development.



I like to answer the phone and talk to people I know. I feel proud to take a message for you.

Notice me doing something good and tell me how proud you are of me. This will make me feel good about myself, and I will want to do it again.

Help me learn about the feelings of others through stories. Characters in books have feelings and experiences, are afraid, or have problems to overcome. You can probably find a book about someone who is just like me.



I still need lots of practice with pencils, crayons, and chalk. Activities like colouring, drawing, dot to dot, mazes, as well as tracing and copying letters, shapes, and numbers will help me at school.

I like to experiment using different materials. Fill up a craft box so I can be creative using glue, clay, wood, yarn, tape, scissors, paper, pencils, markers, crayons, or odds and ends.



I like to play games such as hide and seek, tag, dodge the ball, and red rover. This helps me learn rules of games and helps me to take turns.

I love to ride my bicycle and I may even be ready to let go of my training wheels. Make sure I am wearing my helmet.



My friends and I enjoy going to the park or playground with you. We love to climb, swing, slide, and explore the equipment so we can try new things.

Board games are fun. I learn about rules, counting, taking turns, winning, and losing. Don't always let me win. It's all right for me to lose.



I feel important when I have a few simple jobs.



I like a mystery. You think of something, and I will guess what it is by asking you questions ("Is it food?" "Is it an animal?" "Does it have four legs?" "Is it a dog?").

I have a lot to say. Talk with me often throughout the day about things that interest me. When you listen to me, I learn how to tell a story from beginning to end. Ask questions so that I can remember the details of my day.



I'm learning so much. Let's play using letters, numbers and colours ("I spy with my little eye three things that are red" or "I spy something blue that starts with B").

Sign me up. I want to be part of a team.

All children my age should have a vision, hearing, and dental checkup. Ask our family doctor or public health unit where these services are available in our community.

If you answer "no" to any question or have any concerns about your child's development, follow-up with your health care and/or child care professional

School related nutrition information

The following information will help you provide good nutrition for your child once he starts school.

- It is good for your child to eat a healthy breakfast every morning. Breakfast will provide the energy and nutrients his body needs to grow and his brain needs to learn.
- Your child will likely have to bring a morning snack, an afternoon snack, and a lunch to school. These should be healthy foods based on Canada's Food Guide – see the EatRight Ontario website at for healthy food ideas and sample lunches at: www.eatrightontario.ca/en/ViewDocument.aspx?id=41.
- Find out about the food allergy policy at your child's school. Once you know which foods to avoid, keep them in mind when reading the ingredient list on food labels and when packing snacks and lunches.
- Think about the containers and packaging for your child's lunches and snacks. Many schools ask parents to send reusable containers to reduce waste. Make sure your child can open and close the containers in his lunch box.
- Choose healthy drinks for your child, such as water, 100% juice, or milk. On hot days or school outings, send extra water for your child to drink.
- Make sure your child's food is safe to eat and is not likely to make him sick. Teach your child to wash his hands before eating. Pack foods that don't spoil easily. A small icepack or a frozen drink can keep your child's food cool. Check the EatRight Ontario website for food safety tips at: www.eatrightontario.ca/en/ViewDocument.aspx?id=12.
- When your child returns from school he may need a snack, especially if dinner is still some time away. Meals and snacks should be at the same time each day. Set a good example, eat with your child and choose healthy foods.
- Include a variety of different foods in the meals and snacks you provide at home or send to school with your child. Go for healthy choices, such as veggies and fruit, or cheese and crackers, if you choose to send snacks for classroom celebrations or school events.
- For more information check the nutrition resources here and at the end of this booklet.

If you have any questions about your child's nutrition, eating habits or the food textures he prefers:

- talk to a dietitian at EatRight Ontario
1-877-510-510-2 or www.ontario.ca/eatright
- check *Canada's Food Guide* at:
www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index-eng.php
- check out Aboriginal nutrition information for your child at www.letsbehealthy.ca
- NutriSTEP® is a nutrition screening tool that can identify potential nutrition problems in preschoolers and provide parent nutrition education and links to community resources. Contact your local public health unit to learn more.



Vision checklist and information

Children may not know that they have a vision problem. They can't always tell you what they see. One out of six children has a significant eye problem which can interfere with their learning and development.

Does your child behave in a way that could suggest a vision problem?

Closes or covers one eye?	Yes <input type="radio"/>	No <input type="radio"/>
Squints or frowns when looking far or near?	Yes <input type="radio"/>	No <input type="radio"/>
Rubs the eyes a lot?	Yes <input type="radio"/>	No <input type="radio"/>
Blinks more than usual?	Yes <input type="radio"/>	No <input type="radio"/>
Turns or tilts his/her head when viewing objects?	Yes <input type="radio"/>	No <input type="radio"/>
Holds objects very close to his/her face?	Yes <input type="radio"/>	No <input type="radio"/>
Touches things to help recognize them?	Yes <input type="radio"/>	No <input type="radio"/>
Avoids near tasks?	Yes <input type="radio"/>	No <input type="radio"/>
Loses interest quickly or becomes irritable with close work?	Yes <input type="radio"/>	No <input type="radio"/>

Is there a family history of vision problems?

Parent, brother, or sister who has a turned eye?	Yes <input type="radio"/>	No <input type="radio"/>
Parent, brother, or sister who has a lazy or blind eye?	Yes <input type="radio"/>	No <input type="radio"/>
Parent, brother, or sister who has glasses with high power?	Yes <input type="radio"/>	No <input type="radio"/>
Were there complications with the pregnancy?	Yes <input type="radio"/>	No <input type="radio"/>
Was your child premature at birth?	Yes <input type="radio"/>	No <input type="radio"/>

Did you know?

In Ontario, children can have their eyes checked by an optometrist for free. Even if your child does not show any signs of a problem, it is best to have each child's vision checked at age 3 or when starting school.

Every child should get an eye exam every year. The cost of an eye exam for children in Ontario up to the age of 19 is covered by OHIP. This can be done by an optometrist. Look for a list of optometrists near you at www.eyecareoao.com. You can also check other resources about health and vision on page 28.



This checklist is adapted with permission from the Chatham-Kent Public Health Unit.

My child's smile – a dental checklist

Try to set good oral health habits early in your child's life.

Do you help or supervise your child to brush his/her teeth twice a day? **Yes** **No**

An adult should help or supervise young children when they are brushing their teeth.

Does your child have less than two cups of juice a day? **Yes** **No**

Drinks containing sugar, even naturally, increase the risk of cavities in teeth.

If you have any cavities, have they been treated? **Yes** **No**

Bacteria that cause cavities can be passed on to your children.

Are your child's snacks a healthy choice? **Yes** **No**

Snacking often on sugary snacks will increase the acid attacks in your child's mouth.

Do you check all surfaces for decay? **Yes** **No**

Cavities found early can be fixed more easily and cheaply.
Check chewing surfaces and lift the lip to check at the gum line.

Do you floss your child's teeth? **Yes** **No**

Many cavities start between teeth.

Has your child been to see a dental professional? **Yes** **No**

Children should see a dentist or oral hygienist by 12 months of age
or within 6 months of getting their first teeth.

Is your child using a pea-sized drop of fluoridated toothpaste? **Yes** **No**

Fluoride helps to strengthen the teeth. Make sure your child does not swallow the toothpaste.

If you have answered 'No' to any of these questions, check with your local dental office.

This checklist is adapted with permission from the Chatham-Kent Public Health Unit.

Immunization

When your child starts school, all his shots (immunizations) need to be up to date.

To check which shots your child should have, go to:

www.health.gov.on.ca/english/providers/program/immun/pdf/schedule.pdf

Your child is due for more vaccines between the ages of 4-6 years.

Keep a record of your child's immunizations. Your school or Public Health Unit may ask for them.

If you have questions about your child's immunizations, please call your family doctor or your local Public Health Unit.



Routines and self-help checklist

This checklist will remind you of things in your daily routine and your child's daily routine that will help her be prepared for school. Some questions about your child's self-help skills and safety practices are also included.

- | | | |
|--|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| My child gets up around the same time each morning. | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> |
| My child has a bedtime routine and it is usually easy to get my child to sleep every evening. | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> |
| My child sleeps at least 10 hours most nights. | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> |
| My child has breakfast each morning. | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> |
| My child is busy with physically active play for at least three hours per day. | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> |
| My child has a time during the day when she plays quietly or has a nap. | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> |
| My child has no more than one hour of screen time (TV, computer, or video games) per day. | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> |
| My child can ask an adult for help. | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> |
| My child knows how to dress herself (except for some buttons, zippers, and ties). <i>*Note: This is more likely for 4 or 5 year olds.</i> | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> |
| My child can go to the bathroom without or with little help. | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> |
| My child knows how to wash her hands to prevent the spread of infections. | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> |
| My child can tell others her full name. | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> |
| My child knows how to cross the street safely with an adult. | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> |
| I have shown my child how she will get to school and return home (walking with a designated adult, taking the school bus or being driven to school). | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> |
| My child is familiar with the school and the school yard. | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> |
| My child can open and close lunch and snack containers. | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> |
| My child can tell others about her activities, outings, or events. | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> |

If you have answered “no” to any of these questions that does not mean your child is not prepared for school. Just take some time to set routines and practice self-help and safety skills. Try some of the activities listed in this booklet. To help your child get to know other places and people before she starts school you can:

1. Go to early learning programs at Ontario Early Years Centres.
2. Go to your local library, recreation centre, friendship centre, or family resource centre.
3. Take your child on trips to the park, a museum, the grocery store, or for a bus ride.
4. Check with your local school to see if they offer a Kindergarten visit during the spring of the year before your child goes to school.

For more tips and information, or if you have questions, call your local Public Health Unit.

Parent quiz

Now, that we are almost at the end of the booklet, let's review what we have talked about.

1. Children are learning from the day they are born. True False
2. Good nutrition is an important ingredient for learning. True False
3. A secure attachment develops when parents respond warmly to their child's needs and cues. True False
4. Self-regulation is a skill that is developed throughout childhood. True False
5. Children learn through play. True False
6. Physically active play develops children's large and small muscle skills. True False
7. Parents can use the Nipissing District Developmental Screen to see if their child is developing according to his/her age. True False
8. Young children prefer to play with other children. True False

Answers:

1. **True.** *From the day they are born, children learn and develop by: touching, seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and doing (e.g., playing).*
2. **True.** *Seven very important ingredients for learning are: lots of love; talking and listening; play, play, and more play – with you; daily physical activity through active play; good nutrition; daily routines including lots of sleep; regular health check-ups.*
3. **True.** *A secure attachment is more likely to develop when parents respond warmly and consistently to their child's cues and their child's needs.*
4. **True.** *Self-regulation is a skill that is developed from infancy through the loving and consistent responses from parents and lots of practice through play!*
5. **True.** *Children are busy when they are playing, and they are learning when they play.*
6. **True.** *Being physically active has many benefits. First of all, it is fun. At the same time, children learn a lot of skills such as eye hand coordination, large muscle skills (e.g., running), and small muscle skills (e.g., doing up shoes).*
7. **True.** *The Nipissing District Developmental Screen is an easy to use tool to help you track if your child is developing according to his age.*
8. **False.** *You are your child's favorite toy. There is nothing in the world your child would rather do than play with you!*

Resources for families

This booklet has given you some answers and tips on how to prepare your child for school. Here are some more resources.

There are many wonderful resources in your community. To find out what is offered in your community contact your local **Public Health Unit or Band Council** (if you are living on a reserve) to find out what programs (e.g., Mother Goose programs), activities (e.g., skating), and resources (e.g., parks, libraries, community centres) are available in your community. Your local library also has books you can read with your child to help with the transition to school.

Online resources

There are also lots of resources you can get online. If you don't have a computer or the Internet, you can access these at your local library or ask your public health nurse or a friend to print them out for you.

Attachment:

My Child and I – Attachment for Life.

You can download this brochure from the Best Start Resource Centre at: www.beststart.org/resources/hlthy_chld_dev/pdf/parent_attachment_eng.pdf

Other Languages:
www.beststart.org/resources/other_languages/index.html

Growth and Development:

Healthy Baby Healthy Brain is a website to help parents support their child's early brain development.
www.healthybabyhealthybrain.ca

Is My Child Growing Well? This fact sheet tells parents about their child's growth. It is available in English, French, Spanish, and Traditional Chinese.

English: www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/is_my_child_growing_well

Health:

Baby Oral Health: Pregnancy through Childhood is a good online resource for parents. Go to: www.utoronto.ca/dentistry/newsresources/kids/index.html

Vision: The Eye See Eye Learn Program was developed to raise awareness among parents about the importance of having their children's eyes checked before starting school. Go to: www.eyeseeeyelearn.ca or call 1-855-424-ESEL (3735)

Nutrition:

Canada's Food Guide: Download a FREE copy at: www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index-eng.php

EatRight Ontario has registered dietitians answer questions about your and your child's nutrition. The website also has fact sheets on a variety of nutrition topics. Here are two fact sheets related to school nutrition.

Packing Healthy School Lunches and Snacks FAQs. See: www.eatrightontario.ca/en/ViewDocument.aspx?id=41

Make a balanced breakfast a habit in your home. Go to: www.eatrightontario.ca/en/ViewDocument.aspx?id=85

How to Build a Healthy Preschooler is a brochure developed by the Nutrition Resource Centre that helps parents feed their preschool children in a healthy way. Go to: www.eatrightontario.ca/en/ViewDocument.aspx?id=324

Parent Involvement and Support:

Father toolkit: *Fatherhood –*

It's the Best Job on the Planet, go to: www.mydad.ca/toolkits/nfp_toolkit_eng.pdf
This toolkit was funded by the CAPC/CPNP National Projects Fund and the Public Health Agency of Canada.

Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres provides support to Friendship Centres across Ontario. These centres have programs and support for urban Aboriginal children and their parents. Go to www.ofifc.org to find a friendship centre in your area or while in Kindergarten.

Supporting Parents. The Canadian Association of Family Resource Programs provides information and support for parents. Go to: www.parentsmatter.ca

The *Canadian Father Involvement Initiative – Ontario Network*. This website contains useful tips, resources, information, and downloadable booklets for anyone interested in learning more about father involvement in the lives of their children. There is also a section called “Fathering Q&A” where you can send a question and have it answered. Go to: www.cfii.ca

Play:

Active play: For ideas on how to include physically active play with your child and information about the importance of active play go to: Active Healthy Kids Canada at: www.activehealthykids.ca

Have a ball together is a website that provides information and tips on how to include physically active play, when playing with your child. www.haveaballtogether.ca

Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines talk about minimizing sedentary time during waking hours and then give some guidelines for physical activity for 0-4 years at: www.csep.ca/CMFiles/Guidelines/CSEP-InfoSheets-early-years-ENG.pdf and www.csep.ca/CMFiles/Guidelines/CSEP-InfoSheets-ENG-Early-Years-FINAL.pdf

5 Strategies for Raising Healthy Happy Kids supports what you have read in this booklet at: www.ophea.net/schoolandhome

The *Canadian Association of Family Resource Programs* has a set of brochures on playing with your child from birth to age 5 at www.frp.ca “Why Play?”.

Toy Safety Tips pamphlet from Health Canada. Go to: www.hc-sc.gc.ca/cps-spc/pubs/cons/toy_safe-jouet_secur-eng.php

Preparing for School:

The Ministry of Education has *a lot of information about Kindergarten and how you can prepare your child* on their website at: www.edu.gov.on.ca/kindergarten Particularly helpful for the transition to school is the *All about me* section that you can print off and fill in to help your child’s teacher know about your child. Go to: www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/a2.pdf

Other useful websites and phone numbers

Canadian Child Care Federation. This organization provides resources and professional development to child care practitioners and parents. Over 90 resource sheets on many different topics are available on their website at: www.cccf-fcsge.ca/publications/resourcesheets_en.html

Canadian Paediatric Society. On this website parents can find lots of information about their child’s growth and development, health, safety, and many other topics. Go to: www.caringforkids.cps.ca

EatRight Ontario 1-800-510-510-2 or www.ontario.ca/eatright offers nutrition advice and help by phone or Internet.

Ministry of Children and Youth Services, Government of Ontario. This website has information on programs and services for you, including a section on Early Childhood at www.ontario.ca/children

- Aboriginal children
- Best Start program
- Ontario Early Years Centres
- Healthy Babies, Healthy Children program
- Infant Hearing Program
- Blindness and Low Vision
- Speech and Language program
- Special needs.

If you have any questions about services provided by the Government of Ontario go to: www.serviceontario.ca or call: 1-800-267-8097.

Public Health Units in Ontario – to find your local Public Health Unit check www.health.gov.on.ca/english/public/contact/phu/phu_mn.html or call 1-800-532-3161.

Glossary

Word(s)	Definition
Attachment	Attachment is a powerful, emotional relationship that develops between children and the important caregivers in their lives. Children can develop secure or insecure attachments with their caregivers.
Cue	A cue is a signal to indicate what the child or person wants or needs at that moment. Cues are not words, but other ways of communicating, such as behaviour (e.g., fidgeting), body language (e.g., yawning), facial expressions (e.g., smiling), and sounds (e.g., crying).
Immunization	Immunizations (also called vaccines or shots) are given by a health care provider. They help a person's immune system fight a disease such as measles or the flu that can be caught from others. From the age of two months, children in Ontario receive a number of immunizations to prevent them from getting diseases that can make them sick or cause long-term problems.
Kindergarten Team	The Kindergarten team are the professionals working in the Kindergarten class. Depending on class size your child will either have a Kindergarten teacher or a full-day Kindergarten team made up of a teacher and an Early Childhood Educator.
Large muscle skills	The ability to use the large muscles of the body in order to stand up, walk, run, pull, push, and balance oneself.
Language skills	These skills include speaking, listening, reading, and writing.
Literacy skills	These skills enable a child to read and write. Scribbling, drawing, looking at books, and pretend reading are also called pre-literacy skills.
Quiet time	Time that children spend each day in their bedroom or a quiet area, usually at the same time each day. They may not need a nap, just some quiet time to play with quiet toys or look at books.
Self-regulation	Self-regulation is the cornerstone of development and is the central building block of early learning. Self-regulation is the ability to adapt one's emotions, behaviours and attention to the demands of the situation.
Self-help skills	There are five major types of self-help skills: eating, dressing, grooming, toileting, and household skills (e.g., putting toys away or opening and closing a door).
Small muscle skills	These are skills that involve the use of the small muscles of the hand, fingers, and thumb, usually in coordination with the eyes (e.g., grasp a rattle, hold a pencil, pick up objects).
Social skills	These are skills which enable children to interact and communicate with other people. Social skills consist of behaviours that people learn in order to get along with others.

Acknowledgements

The Best Start Resource Centre thanks staff from the following organizations for their help to develop this booklet:

- Canadian Child Care Federation
- Chatham-Kent Public Health Unit
- George Brown College
- Halton Our Kids Network
- Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit
- Northwestern Health Unit
- Nutrition Resource Centre
- Ophea
- Peel District School Board
- University of Guelph

We would also like to thank the parents and the experts who helped to review and finalize this booklet.





best start
meilleur départ

by/par health **nexus** santé

Best Start: Ontario's Maternal, Newborn and Early Child Development Resource Centre

www.healthnexus.ca | www.beststart.org

*This document has been prepared with funds provided by the Government of Ontario.
August 2012*