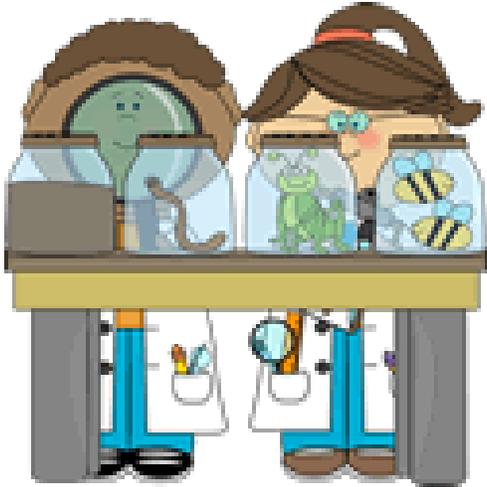


Suggestions for helping your child develop...

Cognitive Skills



- Encourage children to count and match objects such as socks and mitts
- Model using numbers: cell phones, calendar, ages, birthdays, calculators, clocks...
- Observe and care for a family pet
- Observe and care for a family garden or a single plant
- Model and have children measure and count when cooking
- Set the table, count out snack and dishes
- Ask questions to stimulate curiosity, explorations and problem-solving (I wonder what would happen if..., Why do you think..., what just happened..., Let's try it again and see...)
- Listen closely and answer your child's questions or look for answers together...
- Draw children's attention to numbers, shapes and letters at home and on outings
- Read with your child
- Encourage children to represent their ideas by drawing or sketching



Language and Communication Skills



- Connect to a local library or literacy hub
- Borrow storybook bags from the local library, create and offer story book bags featuring your child's favourite books
- Attend "Come Read with Me" events in your community

- Attend "Literacy Nights" at your school
- Look for cultural books, share your family culture and traditions

- Share stories, songs (rhymes, tongue twisters...), read and converse with your children

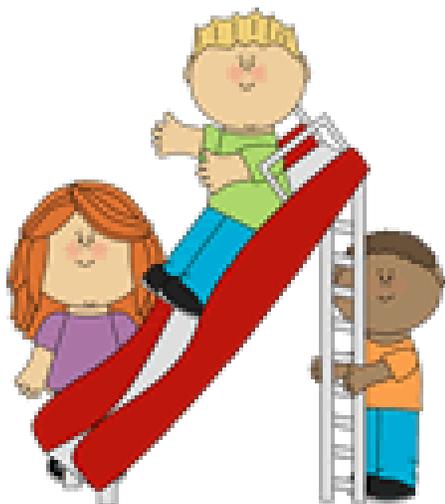
- Write children's words and stories for them

- Listen to your child, comment and ask questions to encourage further conversation (avoid yes/no answers)

- Hold genuine conversations, children have many cool ideas to share and will enjoy learning about your ideas and thoughts



Gross Motor Development

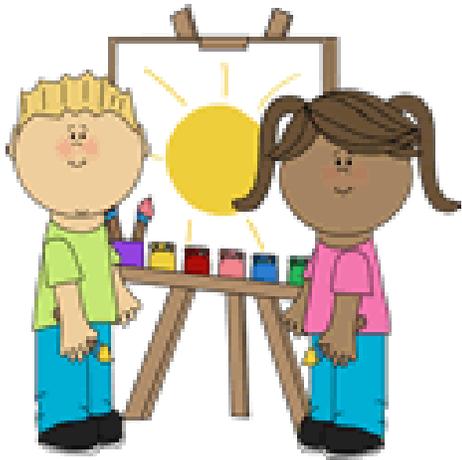


- Take walks in your neighbourhood – giant steps, baby steps, hopping, jumping, skipping, galloping, jumping over cracks...
- Ensure that children have space to move and regular opportunities to do so – rolling down a hill, pulling and sliding on a sled, riding bikes, crawling through a tunnel...

- Attend gym nights at your school or in your community
- Hold a family game day/night – Frisbee, ball, dodge ball, bowling...
- Go skating, sledding, snowshoeing, skiing, swimming...
- Nature walks – notice the changes each season brings, collect pine cones, twigs, rocks...



- Try yoga, martial arts...
- Visit your local playground – climb over and under, swing, go down the slide, balance on a bench...
- Practice throwing and catching large soft balls, harder smaller balls, hit a balloon with a racket, shoot a puck with a hockey stick...
- Check your Community Association Newsletter/School Newsletter for physical activity offerings in your area



Fine Motor Development

- Provide opportunities to paint, cut, glue, pour, squeeze...
- Offer Duplo, Lego, building blocks, playdough, plasticine, beading, doll clothes with zippers and buttons, small containers with lids, tongs, tweezers...for small hands

to manipulate

- Painting (broad/thin brushes), colouring with wax crayons, pencil crayons, markers (variety of widths, requires different pressure)
- Offer novelty pens, pencils, small booklets or notebooks for drawing and writing (making lists, restaurant orders, letters to family...)
- Cut pictures from flyers and make grocery lists, shopping lists...



- Encourage children to draw or sketch their ideas
- Encourage children to pour their own beverage such as milk and use a knife for spreading
- Offer cooking/baking experiences
- Ask child to turn the pages as you read a book





Social Skills & Approaches to Learning

- Talk about rules you have at home and why rules are important
- Introduce rules in the community as you drive in the car, walk to the park...why the rules are important
- Help children to work on their problem-solving skills to resolve disagreements at school, home, and on the playground (role play, what could you say if..., what would happen if..., how could you solve that problem...)
- Participate in community-based programs such as library programs, soccer, swimming, arts & crafts...
- Encourage playdates with friends at home
- Invite friends on excursions with you and your family
- Unplug technology for a while and engage your child in board games, puzzles, building with you, playing with you
- Converse with your child about their day, their activities, what they like, what they don't like...



- Read books that feature characters with problems to solve, decisions to make...discuss how the characters could solve the problem, what decisions your child would make...



Awareness of Self and Environment

- Go through family photo albums together, discussing activities, family gatherings, cultural celebrations you have shared...
- Display photos of your child at different ages – baby, toddler, today – ask them how they have changed, what they like to do now that is different than what they did when they were smaller...
- Sing songs like “Head and Shoulders” but add other body parts
- Encourage children’s conversations about people and activities that are important to them
- Take neighbourhood walks and field trips connected to children’s interests- draw children’s attention to aspects of wonder and beauty in the environment such as dew sparkling on a spider web or the swelling bud of a plant...
- Model and encourage children to use powerful description words such as “slimy, cold, prickly, smooth...”
- Encourage children to express their excitement – tell a story, paint a picture, act out events, create songs, dance, or simply close their eyes and think about an experience

