

Hughes-Elizabeth Lakes Union
School

Kindergarten Round Up
Parent Packet



Please take one per family.

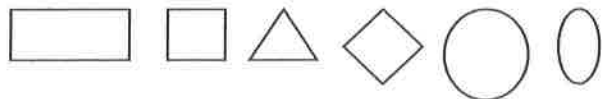
Preparing Your Child for Kindergarten

You are your child's first and most influential teacher. Children who arrive able to do the following are ready to experience a very successful kindergarten year. The first 6 items are the most important of all.

1. Parents: Are *you* ready? Be prepared to consistently go through your child's backpack every day after school, read all notes and newsletters, review papers with your child, help him or her complete homework to return to school day, come to conferences, Back-to-School Night, Open House and other events! There is a direct association between parent interest and involvement and a child's academic performance.
2. Children should have been read to almost daily for at least 15 minutes over the past several years (the most important of all). It's never too late to start!

Children should be able to:

3. Sit quietly, watch, and listen for at least 15 minutes (to something without a screen☺).
4. Play with other children in a friendly, nonaggressive way, taking turns and sharing.
5. Obey directions willingly the FIRST TIME they are told.
6. Be responsible for cleaning up after themselves.
7. Occasionally choose to do quiet cutting/coloring/drawing by themselves, holding the scissors/crayon/pencil correctly.
8. Identify common sights and sounds in their environment, common animals, fruits and vegetables, community helpers, places, and forms of transportation.
9. Identify at least 10 colors. Test them yourself: Take the crayons out of a box and ask them to identify each color without prompts or hints.
10. Identify 3 or more of these shapes (rectangle, square, triangle, rhombus (diamond), circle, oval:



11. Count to 10 or higher without prompts or hints.
12. Tell you at least half of the following numbers when you point to each number and say, "What number is this?"

1 4 7 9 5 10 3 8 2 6

13. Recite the alphabet without prompts or hints.
14. Identify at least the following letters when you point to them and ask, "What is the *name* of this letter?" If they know all these letters, then ask them the others. Then ask, "What *sound* does this letter make?" In kindergarten we learn the hard consonant sounds, short vowel sounds ("a" as in *apple*, "e" as in *elephant*, "i" as in *igloo*, "o" as in *octopus* and "u" as in *umbrella*, and long vowel sounds ("a" as in *ape*, "e" as in *eat*, "i" as in *ice*, "o" as in *oat*, and "u" as in *unite*).

O X A T B I L R C

15. Point to and identify the letters in their name.
16. Print their own name with a capital at the beginning **only**, with the rest lower case letters.
17. Know their phone number. Put on their own wrap (turning the sleeves right-side-out) and fasten it.
18. Know the meanings of such words as more, less, smaller, larger.
19. Handle a book correctly, know the front and back, can turn the pages one at a time themselves, and know that books tell stories or give information about something.

Kindergarten

Connection

WORKING TOGETHER FOR SCHOOL SUCCESS

Hughes-Eliz Lakes Union School
Kindergarten Program



KID BITS

Things will get better

If your child becomes shy or tearful during the first weeks of kindergarten, don't be alarmed. Such reactions are normal. Reassure your child that things will be better as she gets used to school. If anxiety continues more than six weeks, contact the teacher.

Dream team

Get to know your child's teacher as soon as possible. If you can't meet in person, introduce yourself with a note. When the two of you team up, your child is the winner!

Take a look

Try to sit down with your child each day to look at the items he brings home from school. *Benefit:* You'll see what your child is doing, and your interest will encourage him.

Just for fun



"I thought you said we were going to use elbow grease. This looks like glass cleaner."

The adventure begins!

Off to kindergarten

Imagine that you're starting a new job tomorrow. You've never met your boss or your co-workers. You aren't even sure what your duties will be.

Wouldn't you be a bit nervous—as well as excited? That's probably how your child feels about starting kindergarten.

How can you help him or her get off to a great start? Here's what several kindergarten teachers have to say.

Simple clothing is best

"Send your child to school in practical clothing. One-piece outfits with buttons or buckles are hard to handle in the bathroom. Shoes with soft soles, such as tennis shoes, are safer on the playground than sandals and flip flops. Also, please label jackets, boots, hats, and mittens."

Practical book bags

"Get a book bag your child can open and close easily. It should be big enough

to hold a large library book. Label the bag with your child's name, the teacher's name, and room number. And notice what he takes to school. For example, toys can be a real distraction."

Make lunches easy

"Does your child have lunch at school? Can he open his own lunch box, thermos, and food containers? If your child has to wait for the teacher to help, he may not have enough time to eat. Look for containers that are easy to handle. If he can't open his thermos, get one with a spout."

Once your child learns to use his own belongings, he will be better prepared to try new things in kindergarten! ♥

ASK YOURSELF

- Do you know your school's policy on arrival and dismissal, late drop-off, early pick-up, lunch, medicine, and transportation?
- Does your child know her first and last name, her parents' or guardians' first and last names, and the names of her teachers? How about her phone number, bus number, and where to go when she arrives at school?
- Can you be reached in an emergency? Be sure the school has your home and work numbers as well as the number of someone to call when you aren't available. ♥



ACTIVITY CORNER

Bath math

You can help your kindergarten child learn math while he splashes around in the tub. How?

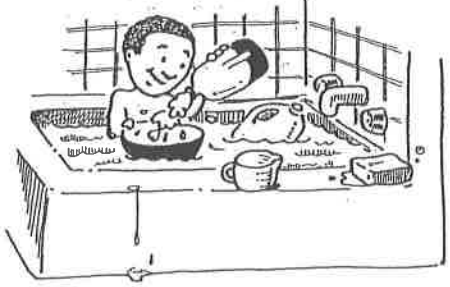
Fill the tub with water and add plastic containers of different sizes (no glass, please).

Old milk containers work well for quart, half-gallon, and gallon sizes. Toss in an 8-ounce measuring cup and a pint-size container as well.

Now the fun begins. Pick up several containers and start asking questions.

- Which holds more water— this cup or this pint?
- How many cups of water will it take to fill this quart? The half-gallon?
- How many quarts of water does it take to fill this gallon?

Not only will your child have good, clean fun — he will also learn a great deal about sizes and measures. ♥

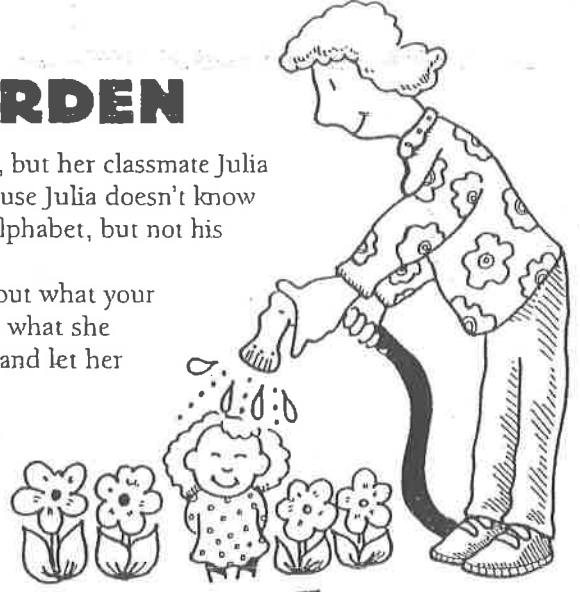


Kinder-GARDEN

Your child can't tie her shoes, but her classmate Julia can. Julia's mother worries because Julia doesn't know the alphabet. Keith knows the alphabet, but not his colors.

It's time to stop worrying about what your child *can't* do. Instead, focus on what she *can* do. Find her special talents and let her know you think she's great!

Like plants, children grow at different rates. Some bloom early and others bloom late. Remember: There are no weeds in kindergarten. ♥



Read all about it!

When you read to your children, they get the message: "Reading is important!" If you have time, read a children's book aloud. But if time is short, read whatever is handy.

Examples: While cooking and using a recipe, read some of the directions. If your children want to know what's on television, read from the TV guide. At the grocery store, try reading signs and labels. In the car, you can read billboards and road signs.

When you "read all about it," your children will, too. ♥

Q&A

Q: How can I help my son be more responsible and confident now that he's started kindergarten?

A: One good way is to let him help out around the house. For example, your kitchen is full of opportunities for little hands to do real work.

Give him a small broom and dustpan for sweeping — especially under the table, after eating.

At mealtime, he can unload silverware from the dishwasher or drain, and place it in a drawer.

After grocery shopping, ask him to help you empty grocery bags and put items away.

He can also assist with meal preparation by mixing, kneading dough, washing and tearing lettuce for a salad, and setting the table. ♥



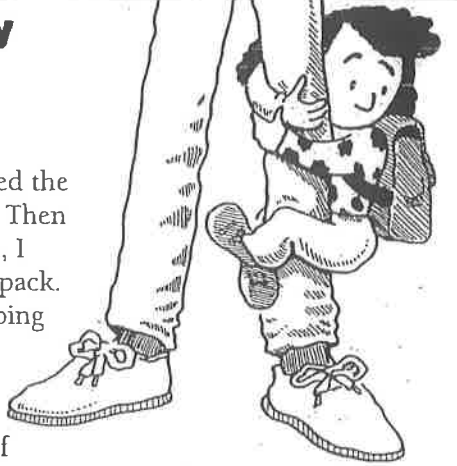
PARENT TO PARENT

The first day

I didn't know who was going to cry on Kate's first day of kindergarten — her or me.

We had planned and prepared. We visited the classroom and met the teacher in advance. Then we practiced walking to the bus stop. Next, I wrote my daughter's name inside her backpack. We even practiced tying her shoes and zipping her jacket. We were ready!

Kate gripped my hand as we walked to room 110. "Can you come in with me, Mommy?" she asked, not letting go of my hand. My heart sank — I knew she was about to cry. Before I could answer, one of her friends called out from the classroom, "Hey, Kate! We've got the same teacher. Come sit by me!" Suddenly, my hand was empty and my eyes were full. ♥



OUR PURPOSE

To provide kindergarten parents with practical ways to promote school success, parent involvement, and more effective parenting.

Kindergarten Connection
 1105 North Royal Avenue, Front Royal, VA 22630
 (540) 635-9911

Secrets of Effective Discipline



Time after time, parents, teachers, and principals rank discipline as one of the top problems they face. But what is discipline? Some people think it means punishing kids and making them obey.

Actually, effective discipline has more to do with teaching children to make good decisions—and to be responsible for their behavior. Plus, effective discipline is a key to school success.

What's the secret to discipline that works? Start with the seven ideas below.

Set limits—fair but firm

Since no two families are alike, only you can decide what rules work for you. But all children need rules that are fair and easy to follow.

It's best to sit down with your children and explain each rule. If your kids see them as fair, they'll find them much easier to accept—and obey. Once the rules are in place, firmly enforce them. The fewer the rules, the better.

Finally, state rules in a positive way that tell children what you *do* want—not what you don't want.

Tip: Some areas in which families choose to make rules: Peacefulness—settle disagreements without violence. Respectfulness—speak politely. Routines—follow a set bedtime on weekdays. Permission—ask before going out.

Use the power of consequences

This might be one of the most effective discipline techniques you can use. It teaches children that their actions have results—and shows them that they are responsible for what they do.

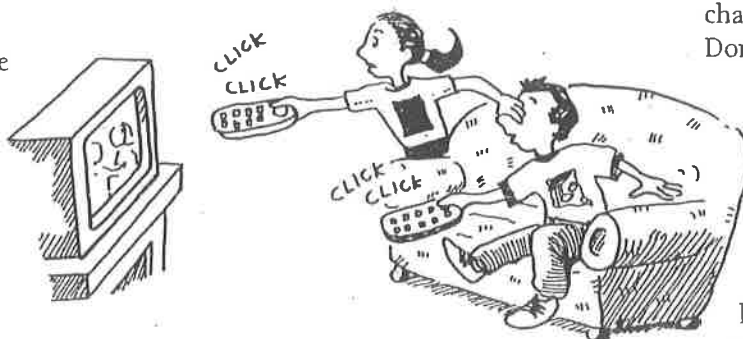
There are two types of consequences. Some happen

naturally. Examples: Bike left out in the rain? It rusts. Homework missed? You get a zero.

Sometimes a consequence to misbehavior isn't automatic—you have to pick it. The trick is finding consequences that relate to the misbehavior. Fighting over TV? It's turned off. Toy misused? It's put away for a while. Curfew missed? Stay home next time.

It can be difficult to stand by and watch your children learn a hard lesson. But if you try to shield them from mistakes, they will lose an opportunity to learn.

Tell your children—in advance—what consequences you plan to use. Then you won't be in the hot seat trying to figure out what to do when you're upset. Some families write down consequences along with the rules.



DISCIPLINE AT SCHOOL

1. Talk with your child about school rules and regulations—and their importance.
2. Show interest in your child's activities.
3. Talk to teachers about your child's behavior and ask for suggestions.
4. If there's a problem at school, talk to your child and get his viewpoint.
5. If a problem continues, contact the teacher.
6. Team up with the teacher to come up with appropriate consequences.



Be consistent but flexible

When your children break a rule, try to deal with it the same way each time—even if they plead, beg, and whine. Giving in tells them the rule isn't firm and that you'll change it if they keep nagging.

Being consistent is challenging. Why? Because children know their parents' "soft" spots and often push them every chance they get. "Oh, come on, Mom. Don't be mean. You let Joey do his homework later!"

Tip: Being consistent doesn't mean you can't be flexible. If you have a visitor, for example, it's fine to extend bedtime. The important thing is to explain why the rule isn't being followed. "You can stay up later tonight so you'll have more time to be with Gramps."

Secrets of effective discipline



Give encouragement and praise

Children often repeat behavior that gets your attention. When they do something you like, notice it! Whether it's making the team or getting a good grade in school, children need their successes recognized.

Comment on efforts and improvements, too, such as waking up on time in the morning or tackling homework without prodding. Praise works best when it is specific to behavior. *Example:* "I see you cleared your place after dinner. I appreciate your help." Praise is least effective when it describes the child, not the job ("What a good boy you are!").

Tip: Here's a secret that will have a big impact on behavior. Try adding privileges when kids do well. It encourages them to try even harder. Find privileges your children will really appreciate, such as a special outing or staying up later.

Set up routines

Tired of all the hassles surrounding mornings, chores, and bedtime? Try using simple routines.

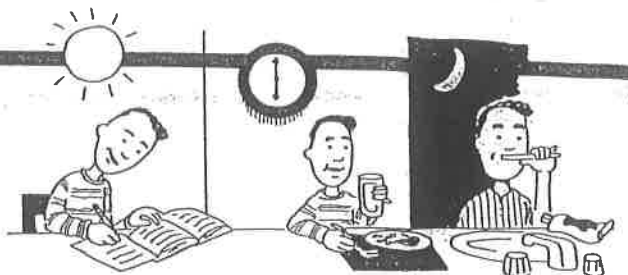
Children thrive on routines. Once they're in place, they know what to do without needing constant directions. Doing the right thing becomes automatic and family life is less chaotic.

For example, a typical bedtime routine may start at 8:15 p.m. and include: book bag ready to go, bath taken, pajamas on, teeth brushed, and bathroom picked up—all by 8:45 p.m.

Don't sweat the small stuff

Whenever possible, try to ignore little things. In other words, pick and choose your battles. It will make life a lot more pleasant. Let's say your child is being annoying. Consider ignoring the behavior that's not destructive or dangerous. Your lack of attention takes away your child's audience and spoils the fun!

When possible, keep a sense of humor. Laughter helps keep communication alive. For example, your child's room is so messy that you feel like blowing up. Try saying, "Looks like a tornado hit. As soon as you clean up the debris, we'll make some cookies together!"



Love works magic

All the best discipline theories in the world won't work without love. Children respond best when they understand the rules are there because you care. Your relationship is the basis upon which everything else rests.

You can cement your relationship by talking, listening, and spending time with each of your children—even when life gets hectic. Some parents actually write in parent/child dates on their calendars.

When your children's behavior gets out of hand, sometimes it's hard to see the positive. It helps to look beyond the behavior and focus on their strengths.

Children don't learn right from wrong overnight. But, with time and patience, most children eventually learn to do the right thing—even when you're not around.

Tip: Kids need to know you love them—and hear it often—no matter how old they are.



DISCIPLINE CHECKLIST

- I involve my children in making family rules and decisions.
- My children know what will happen when they break rules.
- I provide consequences that are fair and relate to the rule broken.
- I try to be consistent in the way I respond to misbehavior.
- I notice my children's efforts and accomplishments.
- My children know and follow routines at home.
- I try to ignore nondestructive, attention-getting behavior.
- I don't expect perfection in myself or my children.



Editor's Note: If behavior problems are severe and nothing seems to work, it may be valuable to look for help. Check with the school counselor or your family doctor.

Kindergarten CONNECTION

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A+ learning environment at home

Whether it's after school, on weekends, or during the summer, you can help your kindergartner be more successful in school.

Your own home and neighborhood are full of opportunities to help build a love of learning in your child. Many simple activities can be done as you go about your normal routines—running errands, preparing meals, or even opening the mail.

The fact is, children do much better in school when parents get involved and show an interest in learning.

This special report is full of practical ideas and activities you can use to encourage success in reading, writing, math, science, and social studies.

Choose several activities to enjoy with your child. They take very little time—and they're fun.



WHY GET INVOLVED?

Research shows that children who take part in learning activities at home do not fall behind during their time away from school. No other type of parent involvement does more to increase school achievement.



WORD PLAY

■ Reading aloud to your kindergartner is one of the easiest ways to build reading success. It takes only a few minutes and can become one of the best parts of your day. Set aside a regular time and begin building pleasant reading memories—and you'll get your child "hooked on books."

■ Put a chalkboard or bulletin board in your kitchen. Now that your kindergartner is learning to read, write messages, such as "Feed the cat." You might also tack on simple cartoons or interesting newspaper articles you can read to your child later.

■ Games such as *Scrabble for Juniors*, *Spill and Spell*, and *Junior Boggle* can help strengthen your child's reading skills and provide family fun.

■ Leave books about your child's favorite subjects—for example, dinosaurs, snakes, spaceships—lying around the house. Also, make sure your kindergartner sees you reading for pleasure.

■ Books aren't the only way to get reading practice. Encourage your child to read traffic signs and to find words she knows on cereal boxes, product labels, and menus.

■ Your mail can also spark an interest in reading. Together, sort it by categories—newspapers, letters, and catalogs. Let your child open a few items for you to read aloud. Then talk about each piece. For example, say, "Look! There's a sale on boots. Are yours too small?"

JUST ABOUT WRITE!

■ Inspire your kindergartner to write. How? By recording your youngster's own words. Simply write down stories and jokes your child makes up. A small spiral notebook makes a good first journal. Before long, your kindergartner may want to do all the writing.

■ Writing notes is more fun if your child creates the stationery. Show how to decorate the borders of a sheet of paper, and add your youngster's name and address at the top. You can put lines on the paper and make a dozen copies. Once your kindergartner receives a reply, the excitement of writing back will take over.

■ Since children learn by example, let them see you write checks, shopping lists, notes, and letters. Explain what you're writing.

Note: Don't be concerned about your kindergartner's spelling and grammar. At this age, it's more important to kindle an enthusiasm for writing.

NAME THAT NUMBER

■ Put your kindergartner's counting ability to work. Your child can count out napkins, the library books you're checking out, the days until the weekend, and how many people are having dinner.

■ Give practice in sorting things such as silverware (forks, teaspoons, tablespoons), blocks (by size and color), laundry (lights and darks), and money (quarters, dimes, nickels, and pennies).

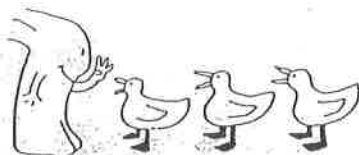


■ Many children's games involve counting and problem solving. Some good choices are *Monopoly for Juniors*, *Checkers*, *Uno* and other card games. Playing games that require two dice will help your child see how addition works.

■ The kitchen is a great place to get math practice, especially when you ask your child to measure ingredients. *Example:* "I need half a cup of raisins and one cup of flour." Talk about doubling or halving a recipe. Then measure accordingly.

■ Make a simple bingo game and play with your child. The goal can be to cover a row or the whole card. Your child can help write the numbers.

■ Cut the front of a favorite cereal box into two puzzle pieces. Let your child put the puzzle back together. Cut the two pieces to make four. If your kindergartner is confident with that, cut it into more pieces. *Tip:* Stop before it gets frustrating.



WORLD OF WONDER

■ Learning to observe the world is an important part of science. Get your kindergartner started by asking questions about the weather, such as "Is it sunny outside?" Also, a simple magnifying glass can give your child a fascinating look at nature. *Examples:* a bug, flower, fingertip, or spider web.

■ By planting seeds, bulbs, or cuttings, your kindergartner can enjoy watching a plant grow. All you need is a small amount of space and some light.

■ Pets are a great way to learn about animal life firsthand. If you can't have a dog or cat, try a gerbil, lizard, or goldfish. Taking care of pets also teaches responsibility.

■ An occasional trip to a museum or an aquarium is an excellent way to get your child excited about science. Follow up these trips by talking about what you saw. Your child might enjoy drawing pictures and "writing" about the day.

■ Most libraries have books packed with science experiments you can do at home using common household materials. You'll also find field guides for identifying insects, trees, seashells, rocks, and birds.

PEOPLE AROUND US

■ Encourage your child's interest in your family history. Your kindergartner can talk to older relatives, collect family stories, or make a family tree. It's important for children to feel connected to their past. So, get out those old photo albums and start talking.

■ As you ride through your community, point out places of interest. Take your child for a visit to a farm, bakery, historical site, or local newspaper.

■ Talk about current events with your child. Point out places mentioned in the news on a map or globe.

■ Show your child a map of your neighborhood. Find your home, the school, shopping areas, and other familiar places. As you travel, mention the direction you're going.

