

GETTING READY FOR KINDERGARTEN:
What Parents Can Do to Support
ORAL LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

- Ask your child open ended questions that allow you to discover your child's understanding, ideas and thought processes.
- Show positive attention by smiling, using a calm voice, making eye contact, getting down on their level, and listening attentively.
- Answer your child's questions. If you are not sure about the answer, let your child see how you find answers to your questions.
- Pause after speaking. This gives your child a chance to continue the conversation.
- Encourage your child to speak in sentences.
- Encourage your child to play and talk with other children.
- If your child pronounces a word incorrectly, model the correct pronunciation of that word for him/her. Child: "Tup." Adult: "You would like a cup."
- When your child makes an error in grammar or word use, model the correct form or word as a part of your response. For example: Child: "I losted my mitten." Adult: "You lost your mitten."
- Introduce a new word and offer its definition, or use it in a context that is easily understood. For example: "I think I will drive the vehicle to the store. I am too tired to walk." Continue to use the new word throughout the week.
- Play board games to enhance vocabulary – Scrabble, Scrabble Junior, Pictionary Junior, Guess Who?, Head Banz and/or Scattegories.
- Read books with your child and talk about the story or information.
- Talk about spatial relationships (first, middle, and last; right and left) and opposites (in, out and up, down).
- Offer a description or clues, and have your child identify what you are describing: "We use it to sweep the floor." (a broom)
- Help your child follow directions: "Go to your room and bring me your book."
- Encourage them to do many things independently. For example: getting dressed, using the bathroom, setting the table, preparing a snack.
- Talk about daily routines and experiences and use them to your advantage. For example: during meals, encourage your child to name utensils needed, discuss foods – their color, texture and shape. Which foods do you like or dislike? Emphasize the use of prepositions by asking him/her to put the napkin **on** the table, **in** your lap or **under** the spoon.
- Provide opportunities for your child to have hands-on experiences to do things in the world. For example: touch objects, pet animals, observe bugs, help with cooking, smell and taste foods, watch cars and trucks move. Talk about how objects look, smell, and feel.
- Provide opportunities for your child to do and see new things. For example: go for walks in your neighborhood, visit the zoo, library, and other places of interest. Talk about your discoveries.
- Provide opportunities for your child to write, draw, dance, listen to music, and make music. Talk about it.
- Encourage your child to use their imagination.