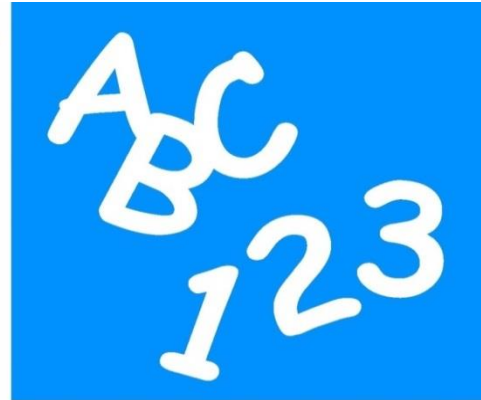


# KinderStart Program Resource Booklet

Division of Early Learning and Child Development

## KinderStart



## Bon départ

Newfoundland  
Labrador

Terre-Neuve  
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Stepping  
into the future

Department of Education

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## Welcome to KinderStart!

The Division of Early Learning and Child Development, Department of Education, is pleased to welcome you and your child to the KinderStart program. The program offers information sessions for you and activity sessions for your child. The KinderStart child sessions are intended to allow your child to experience what it is like to be in a kindergarten classroom the year before school begins. This will help with the transition to school. The parent/caregiver sessions are meant to provide you information on how to support your child's learning at home and get to know the school, the staff, and other KinderStart parents/caregivers.

**NOTE: In the event that a parent is unable to attend KinderStart program sessions, they should identify an adult who will attend sessions with their child as a caregiver. This identified caregiver will pass along to the parent information regarding the KinderStart program, resources, and materials to help support the child's transition from home to school.**



## Section 1- How to use this Resource Booklet

The information in this booklet is intended to help your child have a successful transition into kindergarten, which is the main goal of the KinderStart program.

**Section 2** of this booklet provides an overview of the 'KinderStart' program—its goals and the KinderStart resource bag.

**Section 3** explains the relationships between KinderStart, goals for early learning, school readiness, and play-based learning.

**Section 4** provides tips and suggestions that you can follow to help your child transition to school successfully as they embrace the new environment.

**Section 5** provides information around the inclusive nature of the school environment. You are encouraged to read this section as it helps to understand the school community that you and your child are about to enter.

**Section 6** provides information on how to develop and maintain successful partnerships with others in the school community. You and your child are about to join a team of people who are committed to helping your child grow and develop to their potential.

**Section 7** provides useful information about tracking and documenting your child's development and how school personnel will assess and document your child's learning and development in the classroom environment.

**Section 8** provides a brief overview of KinderStart sessions for children and parents/caregivers.

**Section 9** provides information on how to enhance your child's development in KinderStart with respect to early literacy and numeracy through play-based activities.

**Section 10** provides ideas and activities involving the use of resources provided in the KinderStart bag.

**Section 11** provides some other useful information—partnerships for promoting early learning and child development through public libraries and family resource centres, links to early learning resources, bussing, ideas for play-based early learning activities which can be done with children at home to promote their learning and development in various early learning domains, and the KinderStart Child Information Form.

## Section 2- Overview of KinderStart Program

KinderStart is a school transition program offered in the year prior to Kindergarten entry. It has been developed to help children have a smooth transition into Kindergarten as well as to develop family-school relationships that will enhance learning.

The program consists of orientation sessions organized and promoted at the school level for children and their parents/caregivers. The parent/caregiver sessions are meant to occur at the same time as the child sessions—while children engage in activities with the teacher and peers in the classroom, parents/caregivers attend information sessions at another location at the school.

The child sessions aim to support children's adjustment to the school environment by providing them the 'feel' of school and activities that they will experience. By the time your child finishes this program, they should feel more comfortable in the school environment.

The parent/caregiver sessions will provide you information on how to help your child adjust to the school environment as well as how to support your child's learning at home. These sessions are intended to provide you a platform to obtain information; share your views and challenges; and network with teachers, administrators, professionals, and other parents/caregivers.

### Goals

KinderStart program has the following goals:

- Support children's transition to school by familiarizing them with the school environment in the year prior to school entry
- Enhance the home-school connection in the year prior to school entry
- Enhance planning and preparation for children transitioning to school, especially children with exceptionalities



## KinderStart Resource Bag

As part of the program, a KinderStart resource bag is provided to you and your child with a variety of materials for use at home. These materials have been selected by a group of kindergarten teachers and early childhood educators throughout the province to promote early learning opportunities in the year before school begins. Your child will receive the resource bag and materials from their teacher during their KinderStart year. Please note that your child may receive the KinderStart resource bag with all the materials on the first day, or your child's teacher may pass out select materials at each session. Either way, by the end of the KinderStart year, your child should have all of the materials listed below.

KinderStart resource bag materials include:

- KinderStart Program Resource Booklet<sup>1</sup>
- two children's books:
  - Hibernation Station by Michelle Meadows
  - Peter Puffin by Petr Horáček
- dry-erase board and crayons
- activity mat (for use with messy activities such as clay and paints)
- pad of Crayola construction paper (multi-coloured)
- Crayola modeling clay
- Crayola watercolor paint set (8 colours)
- Crayola crayons (8 piece package)
- pencil
- pencil sharpener
- child-safe scissors
- glue stick
- eraser
- 3"x 3" pad of post-it notes
- clip board
- KinderStart journal

The KinderStart Calendar may be accessed online at <https://www.gov.nl.ca/eecd/earlychildhood/kinderstart/>.

A bilingual booklet '*Voir grand, petit à petit, Dream Big, Little by Little*' is available **upon request** for parents/caregivers interested in developing their child's French language and preparing them for entry into the French-language school. This booklet provides ideas and suggestions on how parents/caregivers can help their child build a

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<sup>1</sup> This guide was based in part on the Welcome to Kindergarten™ – The Learning Partnership – Family Activities for Early Learners Resource Book



francophone identity at home. The booklet is a joint effort of Association canadienne d'éducation de langue française (ACELF), Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF), and Commission nationale des parents francophones (CNPF).

Please visit <https://www.acef.ca/ressources/VoirGrand-Petit-a-petit.pdf> to access the booklet online. If you wish to receive a printed copy of this booklet, please let the KinderStart teacher know.

If you have any questions regarding the KinderStart program or the materials provided in the resource bag you may contact your child's KinderStart teacher, e-mail [KSBD@gov.nl.ca](mailto:KSBD@gov.nl.ca) or visit the [Department of Education's website](https://www.gov.nl.ca/education/) (<https://www.gov.nl.ca/education/>).

## Section 3- KinderStart and Early Learning

### Goals for Early Learning

'Navigating the Early Years: An Early Childhood Learning Framework' outlines goals for early learning of children from birth to eight years of age. These goals highlight effective practice and provide a guide for adults to support children's learning and development. KinderStart embraces these interrelated goals that have been summarized as follows:

- **Well-Being and Belonging**

**Goal:** Children will experience learning environments that promote a sense of well-being and belonging.

The well-being of children refers to their physical and emotional health. Belonging refers to a sense of relatedness and acceptance, which cultivates positive, lasting, and significant interpersonal relationships. Children need to feel safe in all environments. Their sense of security is paramount for ensuring their health and well-being. Children need respect; their identities honored. They need a healthy, stable home environment that provides love, warmth, and security with responsive family relationships. All learning environments should provide positive learning opportunities.



- **Communication**

**Goal:** Children will experience learning environments that provide a variety of opportunities and tools for them to develop the ability to communicate effectively.

Effective communication is crucial to learning and development. Communication is more than verbal language. There are many forms of language and expression. To connect with others, children can use non-verbal language (e.g., gestures, body language, and facial expressions), sounds (e.g., crying, laughter, and squealing), Braille, sign language, pictures, and other assistive technology. Children can use many tools such as drama, art, music, construction, movement, and dance to express themselves. Early literacy and numeracy activities, such as listening to and telling stories, playing with rhymes, and hearing and singing songs foster these abilities and improve communication.



- **Play and Exploration**

**Goal:** Children will experience learning environments that provide rich and varied opportunities for them to learn and explore through play.

Play is learning. Play is defined as a fun, open-ended, and spontaneous activity chosen by the player. It is how children make sense of the world around them and find their place in it. Play is important for a child's social, emotional, language, cognitive, and physical development. Play-based learning is an essential part of children's development. When children are given the opportunity to play and explore their world, their love of learning grows.



- **Social Contribution**

**Goal:** Children will experience learning environments that help them discover who they are and the many ways they can have a positive impact on the world around them.

Children's early learning experiences influence their lifelong learning and development and will have direct impacts for themselves, their community, and society. Children who experience socially responsible and culturally respectful early learning settings are more likely to understand their community, contribute to the society, and develop relationships with people outside their family and culture. These relationships affirm children's identity and help them to have respect for differences while recognizing that we are all human.



For more details, please see 'Navigating the Early Years: An Early Childhood Learning Framework' at <https://www.gov.nl.ca/education/files/Early-Learning-Framework.pdf> and the CMEC Early Learning and Development Framework at <https://cmec.ca/Publications/Lists/Publications/Attachments/327/2014-07-Early-Learning-Framework-EN.pdf>.

## School Readiness

School readiness is about learning skills that ensure a smooth transition to school. These skills ensure success in school and later life, and include:

- **Physical skills:** Examples include gross-motor required to run, jump, roll, etc. and fine motor skills required to hold a pencil, cut using scissors, pinch, press, mold clay or play dough, etc.
- **Emotional skills:** These include emotional awareness and self-regulation skills, such as recognizing and understanding their own and others' feelings and actions; expressing thoughts, feelings, and behaviours in socially appropriate ways; making responsible decisions; understanding how their actions affect others and vice versa; learning to calm down when angry or excited; persisting at tasks.

- **Social skills:** These include skills required to form relationships with others including adults and peers, take turns, help friends, play together, cooperate, resolve conflicts amicably, etc.
- **Language and Communication skills:** These include early literacy and numeracy skills (see section 9) and skills for expressive, pragmatic, and receptive communication—verbal, non-verbal (using expressions, symbols, and gestures), or written.
- **Cognitive and General Knowledge skills:** Examples include thinking, creativity (use things in novel ways), and problem-solving skills (ability to figure out things, find similarities and differences).
- **Self-care skills:** Examples include skills required to button or unbutton shirt, open lunch boxes, tie shoelaces, toileting skills, etc.

KinderStart advocates children’s development through play-based learning across all developmental domains—physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and communication—representing goals for early learning and school readiness skills.

### Play-based Learning

Learning through play is supported by science, experts, children, and parents. **When children are playing, they are learning.**

“When children are manipulating objects, acting out roles, or experimenting with different materials, they are engaged in learning through play. Play allows them to actively construct, challenge, and expand their own understandings through making connections to prior experiences, thereby opening the door to new learning.

Intentional play-based learning enables children to investigate, ask questions, solve problems, and engage in critical thinking. Play is responsive to each child’s unique learning style and capitalizes on his or her innate curiosity and creativity. Play-based learning supports growth in the language and culture of children and their families.”

—CMEC Statement on Play-based Learning

It is important to offer children different types of developmentally appropriate play-based learning activities that take them from simple to complex through sequenced learning challenges.

KinderStart follows principles of early learning and child development. The program recognizes that play is central to children’s learning and development in all early learning domains.

## Play-based Learning and Children's Development

- **Social-emotional Development:** Opportunities for pretend play help children to learn to self-regulate, understand and respond to others' perspectives and feelings, and grow emotionally.



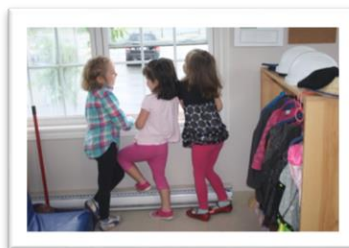
- **Cognitive Development:** Opportunities for block play, solving puzzles, sorting objects, and making up their songs help children to learn by thinking and exploring.



- **Physical Development:** Activities such as climbing, jumping, hopping, running, skipping, and playing with clay help children to improve their balance, coordination, dexterity, and overall muscle strength.



- **Language Development:** A variety of activities such as reading, telling stories, and singing together help children acquire vocabulary, non-verbal cues, and social words that enable them to understand what is being said and how to express their thoughts.



For more details please see the statement on play-based learning from the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC):

[http://www.cmec.ca/Publications/lists/publications/attachments/282/play-based-learning\\_statement\\_EN.pdf](http://www.cmec.ca/Publications/lists/publications/attachments/282/play-based-learning_statement_EN.pdf)

Please refer to the KinderStart Calendar, available online, for links to early learning and child development resources, recipes for snack or play activities, monthly tips for parents/caregivers, suggested reading list, and calendar activities.

Play expands intelligence, stimulates the imagination, encourages creative problem solving, and helps develop confidence, self-esteem, and a positive attitude toward learning.

– (Dr. Fraser Mustard)

## Section 4- Transition to Kindergarten

Starting school is a major life-changing event for children and their families. It can be filled with excitement and challenges. Some children may have an easier time with the transition than others, and this could be due to several factors, including your child's temperament and personality. There may be common elements to children's transition to school; however, it is an individual experience.

Starting school will be a positive experience for children when they are happy, healthy, and feel confident as they move into the school setting. Giving children many opportunities to talk about what school is like and to ask questions about school experiences and expectations is very important. Participating in the KinderStart sessions is a good way to help achieve this.

Through the KinderStart program, your child will meet other children that they will go to school with. They will also meet the school staff, including the kindergarten teacher, who also implements the KinderStart program. The school environment in KinderStart will expose your child to kindergarten materials, activities, expectations, and routines. Over the year, your child will become familiar with the school environment and school routines. This will help in a smooth transition because it will be a familiar environment for them by the time they transition to kindergarten.

Below are some tips to help you support the transition of your child into school<sup>2</sup>:

- Let teachers and education providers know that you, as a parent or caregiver, want to be a partner in your child's education
- Communicate with your child's teacher(s) and help your child in learning at home
- Keep in touch with teachers regarding your child's progress, including both challenges and successes—coordinate your efforts with those of your child's teacher to facilitate learning
- Provide reassurance to your child about aspects of their life that will not change following the school transition as stability helps make for a smooth transition
- Make sure your child gets enough rest by going to bed early the night before school—wake your child up early enough to eat a good breakfast and be prepared for the day (children's physical needs must be met before they are ready to learn)
- Engage your child in talks and discussions about school routines and expectations so they know what to expect when they go to school

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<sup>2</sup> This is adapted with permission from Guidelines for Supporting Successful Transitions for Children and Youth, Government of Alberta, 2006 within the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador/Department of Education's Draft Guidelines for Transition Planning.



- Prepare your child not only for the start of the day but also for dismissal from school—dismissal can be a scary and hectic experience for children who are not supported and prepared for this busy time





## TIPS for BETTER TRANSITIONS

**B**egin early to talk with your child about change

**E**ncourage your child to ask questions and express fears

**T**alk about starting school in positive ways

**T**each your child specific skills and routines that will be useful for school

**E**ngage your child in first-hand experiences

**R**ealize that starting school is a process not just one point in time

**T**alk to the parents/caregivers of the other children in your child's class—learn from each other

**R**oles of everyone in the child's life should be clearly communicated to the school

**A**adjust behavioural expectations as your child takes in all the changes when starting school

**N**otice your child's behaviour and emotions as they begin their KinderStart sessions

**S**tay near your child initially until they feel comfortable in the new environment

**I**nform the school of all relevant information about your child as they join the school community

**T**ry to avoid comparing your child's experience starting school with another child's experience—we are all different

**I**ncorporate information obtained from other environments like childcare and home into the new learning environment

**O**bjects of reference or comfort objects can be brought into the new environment to help ease anxiety

**N**otice the growth and development your child experienced throughout the KinderStart sessions

**S**upport your child as they work through all the emotions they may be feeling as they start school

## Section 5- Inclusion

The Department of Education promotes the basic right of all students to attend their neighbourhood schools with their peers and receive appropriate and quality programming in inclusive school environments. Such inclusive education involves much more than just student placement. It embraces all children—not just those with identified exceptionalities—and involves everything that happens within the school community, culture, policies, and practices.

Inclusion means truly accepting that all of us are members of the human race. It dismisses the concept of 'us and them' accepting all family types (e.g., single parent, same-gender parents, and alternative caregivers), races, genders, abilities, religions, and socio-economic status. Children who are encouraged to appreciate their own and others' identities will experience true inclusion. Children who are encouraged to accept and celebrate diversity will internalize the concept of equality.

If you think your child may require supportive services due to exceptionality, be sure to speak with your child's KinderStart teacher or school administrator to ensure a smooth transition to the school environment.



As an adult in the child's community of care, you can ensure an inclusive learning environment in the following ways:

- Consider all children as unique, with differing abilities and interests
- Promote individual strengths and contributions
- Allow children to have a voice in making rules and routines in their daily lives
- Explain children the concept of responsibility for themselves and others
- Show them how to stand up for themselves and others appropriately
- Promote the concept of fairness
- Educate children about their rights
- Promote peaceful ways to negotiate conflict
- Allow children to make mistakes and learn from these mistakes in supportive ways
- Promote positive discussion and understanding of individual, family, linguistic, and cultural differences
- Avoid the portrayal of stereotypes and model respect, acceptance, and openness to difference
- Integrate diversity into all aspects of the children's learning experiences
- Respond to children's questions and explain similarity and difference as children inquire
- Celebrate difference every day in many ways
- Make connections with children to explore the many similarities that we share
- Explore family, community, and international cultures
- Strengthen children's awareness of stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination and model how to respond appropriately
- Provide opportunities for yourselves and/or children to work together in their daily activities
- Emphasize children's responsibility for taking care of themselves, others, and the earth
- Respect and honour the environment—e.g., practice 'Reduce', 'Reuse', and 'Recycle'
- Connect them to nature—involve them in the care of plants and animals
- Highlight all the ways in which they are connected to their environment and to each other

For more information please see the [Department of Education's website](https://www.gov.nl.ca/eecd/k12/student supportservices/exceptionalities/) for student support services for children with exceptionalities (<https://www.gov.nl.ca/eecd/k12/student supportservices/exceptionalities/>).

## Section 6- It Takes a Village – Home-School Partnership

The positive relationships you build with your child’s teachers and other school personnel will have a direct impact on your child’s success in school. Through observing and modeling these positive relationships, your child will feel that school is a happy place to be, where adults and their friends care about them and want them to flourish.

Throughout the KinderStart program, please do not hesitate to reach out to teachers and other school personnel if you have any questions, concerns, or information to share about your child’s transition to Kindergarten or the KinderStart program itself. They are there to help your child successfully adjust to the school environment.

To facilitate successful transitions, please involve children early on in recreational and socializing activities such as playgroups in family resource centres, community programs, and other programs that help develop social, physical, and cognitive skills. Such activities help to create a social network for both parents/caregivers and children, which can be a valuable support in working through issues and concerns that may arise.

You can see a listing of family resource centres throughout communities in Newfoundland and Labrador that will provide opportunities to enhance your child’s early learning at [www.childcare.gov.nl.ca](http://www.childcare.gov.nl.ca) and other community services at <https://www.gov.nl.ca/eecd/earlychildhood/guide/>.



## Section 7- Assessment, Observation and Documentation

Parents/caregivers often observe, assess, and document children’s learning and development. Anytime you take a picture of your child, save their works of art, track their height and weight on a growth chart, or take note of a new skill, you are observing and documenting their growth and development.

Adults in a child’s community of care regularly track children’s progress of learning and development—what skills and abilities they have acquired, what they are ready to learn, and how they can be supported to reach their potential. The reason children are observed and assessed is to focus on what they can do and what they understand, rather than on what they cannot do. It is based on what they express through drawing, speaking, writing, building, and other physical actions. Assessment is not just about a child’s academic abilities but involves whole child development. It includes the child’s physical, social-emotional, self-help, and communication abilities, which are assessed regularly.

Assessment is an ongoing process that includes a range of ways to capture and validate the many different ways that children achieve outcomes. In school, teachers routinely engage in observation and assessment for learning and development in various environments using different methods to reflect children’s progress. Through assessment processes, teachers and the child’s family gain an understanding of what children are ready to learn and how they can be supported.

It is important that you recognize and celebrate your child’s achievements and accomplishments. KinderStart is an excellent opportunity to take note of progress and compare your child’s skills at the beginning, middle, and end of the program.

On-going documentation—samples of creative activities, printing and drawing, and pictures and videos—support the assessment process. Documentation helps teachers and parents/caregivers understand a child’s skills and abilities, their disposition towards learning, and their preferred methods of expression. This information helps with an informal assessment of the child as they transition into the school environment. The KinderStart journal, included in the KinderStart bag, can be used for this purpose. Please bring the journals to the sessions to add samples.



## Section 8- KinderStart Sessions

### Child Sessions Overview

Children will have the opportunity to explore the school, classroom, and classroom materials. During each session, the teachers will engage children in play-based learning activities that promote development in various early learning domains.

**\*\*\*A detailed implementation plan for child sessions will be available through the school.**

### Parent/Caregiver Sessions Overview

You will attend KinderStart sessions at another location in the school where you will receive information on the following topics:

- **KinderStart:** There will be information about the program, KinderStart early learning resources, and how you might use those resources at home with your child.
- **Play and Exploration:** There will be information on play-based learning and your role as a parent/caregiver in providing opportunities and resources to your child for learning through play. There will be information on what early literacy and numeracy are and how you can promote your child's early literacy and numeracy skills through simple, interesting, and playful activities.
- **Well-being and Belonging:** There will be information and tips on how you, as a parent/caregiver, can contribute to your child's well-being and promote positive behaviours.
- **Social Contribution:** There will be information on how you can foster respect for diversity, equality, and a sense of social responsibility in your child.
- **Communication:** There will be information on how effective communication is necessary for learning. You will explore how you can provide opportunities to develop and promote your child's receptive, expressive, pragmatic, and creative communication.
- **What to Expect in Kindergarten—School Routines:** Information will be provided on what to expect in Kindergarten to help you support your child's transition to school.

**\*\*\*A detailed implementation plan for parent/caregiver sessions will be available through the school.**

#### Please note:

- The scheduling of KinderStart sessions is at the discretion of the school.
- You may be provided Covid-19 related guidelines to follow for KinderStart sessions.



## Section 9- Early Literacy and Numeracy

Literacy development begins at birth and quickly expands within the first six years. It includes learning to communicate, read, write, think, explore, and solve problems. Children develop literacy through oral language development and experiences with families and socially interactive communities.

### Early Literacy

Early literacy is everything a child knows about reading and writing before they can read or write. The six basic skills that comprise early literacy and determine children's ability to learn to read and write are:

- **Print Motivation:** Children have an interest in and enjoyment of books.
- **Vocabulary:** Children know many different words.
- **Narrative Skills:** Children can describe things, events, and tell stories in sequence.
- **Phonological Awareness:** Children understand that words that are spoken, signed, or heard can be broken into smaller parts.
- **Print Awareness:** Children understand that words have meaning, know how to handle a book, and how to follow the words on a page.
- **Letter Knowledge:** Children recognize letters.



### Building Early Literacy Skills

Early literacy skills can be developed and furthered through activities that engage children in talking, singing, reading, writing, and playing.

## Talking

Talking is how children learn spoken language. From birth, children learn about the world around them through opportunities to hear, speak, and communicate in non-verbal ways. As they hear new words, they build up their vocabulary. They try to imitate sounds, tones, and expressions and learn to express themselves effectively. It is important that you:



- Provide opportunities for meaningful and thought-provoking conversations with your child
- Introduce new words to them
- Expand on what they say by offering and encouraging description using more mature language
- Encourage them to imagine, remember, and think about things they see and hear around them
- Ask them to tell you about the best thing that happened that day
- Talk coupled with reading; read to initiate talk or discussion
- Provide multiple opportunities for your child to interact with family and others
- Talk about things that they do or find interesting
- Listen to what they say and make sure you respond to them
- Model clarity of speech, correct pronunciation, and answer questions using complete sentences

For more resources on early literacy through talking, please see [http://raisingchildren.net.au/articles/preschoolers\\_talking\\_play\\_ideas.html/context/285](http://raisingchildren.net.au/articles/preschoolers_talking_play_ideas.html/context/285).

## Singing

Singing and rhyming help children hear the smaller sounds in words. Singing builds memory by connecting pathways in the developing brain and increasing the ability to retain information. Songs are rich in vocabulary. Music builds a strong sense of rhythm and patterns which leads to a better ability to understand and produce language. It also provides an excellent opportunity to dance and develop physical skills. It is important that you:



- Sing, dance, and clap with your child as you enjoy the activities listed in this booklet for both KinderStart books
- Provide opportunities for your child to exercise to the tune of songs



- Play music made for children as well as classical and other forms of music
- Adjust the speed and volume to fit their abilities when you sing with your child
- Provide the opportunity to jump, hop, skip, bounce, and kick to the rhythm of songs
- Provide opportunities to sing with actions
- Appreciate their singing
- Encourage them to create their songs once they have a sense of rhyming words
- Create individualized songs that will engage your child and boost their memory
- Fill your songs with people (family members, teachers, or friends), objects (clothing, furniture, cars, or bikes), daily routines (brushing teeth and bedtime), and special events (holidays and birthdays) that your child can connect with
- Repeat the rhyming words and encourage your child to do the same as you listen to rhymes together
- Ask your child to focus on the sounds of different instruments, the rhythm of the music, and words of new songs
- Introduce them to unfamiliar words in song lyrics and talk about what they mean

For more resources on early literacy through singing, please see

<http://families.naeyc.org/songs>.

## Reading

Reading to children helps them become familiar with print and understand that words have meaning. Reading together is one of the most important things you can do to prepare your child for the transition to school. It is also an opportunity to spend quality time together.

Reading daily to your child will provide them opportunities for receptive, expressive, creative, and pragmatic communication. It will help them to develop vocabulary, print motivation, and listening and language skills. One of the most important things that you can do to build your child's reading and writing skills is to read aloud. As a parent, you can make reading a fun part of your everyday life. It is important that you:

- Let your child select the books that they want to read
- Know what interests your child has and read accordingly
- Re-read your child's favourites
- Point to the text and pictures as you read—this helps your child learn how print works and how books in English or French are



read from left to right, top to bottom

- Develop family reading routines
- Ask open-ended questions while reading stories
- Encourage your child to predict what is going to happen next in the story
- Provide opportunities for your child to engage in conversation or discussion
- Look at the pictures and notice expressions of characters in the stories and any expression words
- Discuss unfamiliar words with your child as you read together
- Encourage your child to retell stories by looking at the pictures
- Provide opportunities for your child to engage in pretend play and use props wherever possible
- Act out the story with your child while reading by using facial expressions, gestures, body movements, voices, and tones to make the story come to life
- Make the story relevant to your child's life by adapting the story to include their name or a friend's name
- Visit your local library with your child and explore the world of books

For more resources on early literacy through reading, please see <http://www.readingrockets.org/article/reading-tips-parents-preschoolers>.

## Writing

Knowledge of letters and phonological awareness (their sounds) helps children to learn to read and write. Children begin with scribbles, draw figures and shapes, draw marks that look like letters, and later begin writing some common consonants in upper case. Opportunities to scribble, paint, draw, and write help children represent their ideas and words in meaningful ways. It is important that you:

- Make scribbling/writing an everyday part of your child's routine at home
- Encourage your child's scribbles—scribbles are the first step in learning to write
- Provide opportunities for your child to scribble, draw, and color using crayons, pencils, the KinderStart Journal, and dry erase board—all of these have been provided in the KinderStart bag
- Provide opportunities for your child to develop their fine motor skills by using crayons, pencils, brushes, and clay



- Encourage your child to notice letters and numbers on the flyers, cereal boxes, or any form of print
- Capitalize on environmental print (signs and symbols) for early literacy development—take your child for neighborhood or school walks and draw their attention to the meaning of signs and symbols
- Write in front of your child and talk about it—explain what you are writing, whether you're writing a shopping list, a thank you note, or completing an application
- Encourage your child to create greeting cards for special occasions—provide paper, crayons, and markers to make cards and then have them sign their name when finished; show them old cards with phrases like 'Happy Birthday', 'I Love you', and 'Season's Greetings'
- Display your child's writing on the refrigerator, the bedroom door, or a cork board to convey to your child that their writing is important and worthy of being shared—this will make them want to draw, scribble, and write more and more

For more resources on early literacy through writing, please see <http://www.readingrockets.org/article/how-do-i-write-scaffolding-preschoolers-early-writing-skills>.

## Playing

Play and learning go together! Playing is how children discover, explore, and understand the world and their place in it. Play is central to children's development—physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and language and communication.

As parents, you are the biggest supporter of your child's learning through play. Your interests, questions, and comments, as you play along with your child, will allow them to use play resources productively. It is important that you:

- Provide them with resources, time, space, and your company to play
- Provide opportunities for your child to engage in various types of play—indoor, outdoor, group, solitary, dramatic, physical, constructive, creative, and games with rules
- Encourage your child to use the resources provided in the KinderStart bag
- Explore interesting and fun ways to play with your child
- Model positive attitudes towards play and play-based learning
- Acknowledge and praise your child's creative work; post it for everyone to see if the child agrees.



For more resources on early literacy through playing, please see <http://www.naeyc.org/play>.



## Early Numeracy

Early numeracy refers to early math skills in a variety of areas such as problem-solving, reasoning, number concepts, geometry, spatial sense, measurement, patterns, and relationships.

### Building Early Numeracy Skills

Children acquire number sense and mathematical skills through play, everyday games, and routines. Make mathematics fun through play and everyday activities to help your child develop a positive attitude towards mathematics and problem-solving. Support math with materials in your home to help them acquire early numeracy skills.

### Number Concepts

- Use fun and familiar objects to make counting enjoyable for them (e.g., counting teddies, toy cars, marbles, shells, buttons, leaves, and pebbles)
- Model counting and point to each object as you say the numeral aloud at the same time
- Count together when there is an opportunity—count backward and forwards
- Sing and chant counting rhymes, songs, and riddles (e.g., ‘One, two, buckle my shoe...’) with them
- Bake something together—measure the quantities, halve them, double them up, and count the pancakes or muffins you made
- Talk to your child about numbers in the environment (e.g., the bus number you are going to take, numbers on the houses, and telephone numbers)

- Encourage your child to help set the table and count the plates, napkins, spoons, forks, and knives
- Engage your child in playing games such as Snakes and Ladders, Ludo, Yahtzee, and Hopscotch



- Encourage your child to count the items as you put them into the grocery cart
- Go through the weekly flyers with your child and point to the prices of different items while shopping
- Provide opportunities for your child to see the price tags and compare the prices of items in a store
- Play pretend grocery store with your child to help them learn the value of coins and bills
- Use a calendar and encourage your child to count how many days before the weekend, or the end of the month

## Measurement

- Provide opportunities for your child to hear words such as more/less, shorter/taller, heavier/lighter, bigger/smaller, wider/thicker/thinner, and near/far, as you make comparisons in terms of quantity, height, weight, size, and distance
- Together with your child, compare two containers and see which one holds more water
- Engage them in comparing the height of different plants in the garden
- Measure your child's height every year on their birthday and talk to them about how much they grew that year
- Encourage them to compare weights of different objects, such as a glass, a jug, a spoon, and a plate

- Engage your child in counting and comparing the number of footsteps required to go from one end of the backyard to the other or from your kitchen to your living room
- Encourage them to observe and compare the size of bags of 200 grams of popped popcorn and sugar
- Engage your child in 'float or sink' activity using a variety of materials, such as leaves, marbles, twigs, rocks, and sticks



## Patterns

- Encourage your child to create and/or repeat sound patterns by clapping their hands and stomping their feet (clap-clap, stomp-stomp)
- Encourage them to observe patterns on the floor tiles, walls of buildings, and clothing—discuss these patterns with your child
- Provide opportunities for them to create patterns with materials such as buttons, leaves, thread, shells, and pebbles
- Encourage them to create music using musical toys, empty cans, bowls, and chopsticks
- Encourage them to create patterns using blocks during block play





- Engage with your children in creating some movement patterns (e.g., walk-walk-jump-skip, walk-walk-jump-skip)
- Engage them in copying and extending the patterns that you have created

## Geometry and Spatial Sense

- Together with your child, use blocks or boxes to build structures
- Encourage them to observe the traffic signs and discuss their shapes



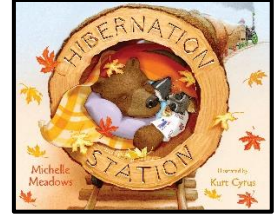
- Go on a shape hunt with your child and identify items in the house and outdoors by shape
- Encourage them to make new shapes by molding clay, folding paper, or cutting paper using child-proof scissors provided in the KinderStart bag
- Provide opportunities for them to discuss how shapes are different and alike
- Play 'I Spy' with your child (e.g., I spy something that looks like a cone, I spy something that looks like a triangle)
- Provide opportunities for them to hear location and position words (e.g., on, over, under, in, out, above, below, behind, between, next to, through, top, and bottom)
- Provide opportunities for your child to hear movement words (e.g., up, down, forward, backward, towards, and away from)
- Provide opportunities for your child to hear distance words (e.g., near, far, close to, far from, shortest, and longest)





## Ideas for Activities from 'Hibernation Station'

(By Michelle Meadows)



### Before reading

- Look at the cover of the book with your child. Ask your child what they think this book may be about.
- Go through the pages of the book and talk about what you see before you begin to read.
- Talk to your child about what 'hibernation' means—a simple definition is 'sleeping through the winter.'

### While reading

- Read this book with lots of expressions and different actions.
- Point to the change in seasons and notice the colours of the seasons.
- Point to various animals in the book. Encourage your child to count them. Ask how they might be feeling- scared, cold, sleepy, or happy.
- Stop at places in the book and predict what might happen.

### After reading

- Use modeling clay to create animal figurines. Give them names.
- Encourage your child to draw something from the book that they liked the most.
- Encourage them to find rhyming words in the book.
- Encourage them to re-tell the story using pictures.
- Together with your child, make your own 'Hibernation Station' using different sized cardboard boxes. Talk about what size boxes would fit real animals.
- Together with your child, think of some other animals that hibernate during winter and where do they go to hibernate.
- Talk to your child about animals that migrate or adapt during winter. Before you do so, familiarize your child with the terms—'migration' and 'adaptation'.

To learn more about this author, visit <https://www.michellemeadows.com/>

## **Hibernation Time** (to the tune of 'Are you sleeping?')

Bear is sleeping, hibernating  
In his den, in his den.  
I wonder when he'll wake up, I wonder when he'll come out?  
In the spring, in the spring!

Bat is sleeping, hibernating  
In his cave, in his cave.  
I wonder when he'll wake up, I wonder when he'll come out?  
In the spring, in the spring!

Snake is sleeping, hibernating  
In his burrow, in his burrow.  
I wonder when he'll wake up, I wonder when he'll come out?  
In the spring, in the spring!

Frog is sleeping, hibernating  
In the mud, in the mud.  
I wonder when he'll wake up, I wonder when he'll come out?  
In the spring, in the spring!

Raccoon is sleeping, hibernating  
In his log, in his log.  
I wonder when he'll wake up, I wonder when he'll come out?  
In the spring, in the spring!

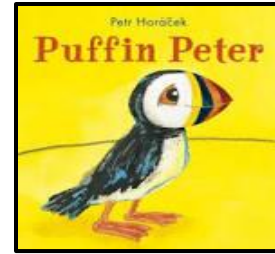
*(Add verses as your child learns about more animals that hibernate)*

Check out more fun books at your local library or Newfoundland and Labrador Public Libraries website at [www.nlpl.ca](http://www.nlpl.ca)

For more information on early learning and child development, visit Department of Education's website at <https://www.gov.nl.ca/education/>.

## Ideas for Activities from 'Peter Puffin'

(By Petr Horáček)



### Before reading

- Look at the cover of the book with your child. Ask your child what they think this book may be about.
- Go through the pages of the book. Talk about what you see before you begin to read.

### While reading

- Read this book with lots of expressions. Use silly voices for Peter and the whale.
- Stop at various places and ask your child to think about what animal they think the whale might be thinking of.
- Stop at places in the book and ask your child what they think might happen next.
- Point to the various birds in the book. Encourage your child to count them.
- Ask how Peter and Paul might be feeling at different points of time in the story—scared, worried, frustrated, sad, lonely, or happy.

### After reading

- Use clay to make the birds from the book.
- Ask your child to use crayons and draw anything from the book they liked the most.
- Encourage your child to re-tell the story using pictures.
- Talk to your child about how they would describe their family members and friends. Encourage them to use as many words as possible.
- Ask them to paint their favourite character from the book using washable paint. Allow them to be as creative as they can.
- Play a guessing game with your child. Choose some animals or things that your child is familiar with. Provide them clues and ask them to guess (e.g., a huge animal in the sea, an animal with a baby pouch, etc.)

To learn more about this author, visit <http://petrhoracek.co.uk/>

## The Puffin of Newfoundland - by Dave Martin

Puffin Island is in Elliston  
And Elliston's in Newfoundland  
And Newfoundland's in Canada  
You can see the Puffin there

Now the Puffin is a cute little guy  
He can walk, he can run, he can swim, he can fly  
He's kind of friendly but mostly shy  
The Puffin of Newfoundland

His beak is orange just like a carrot  
A little bit Penguin a little bit Parrot  
In Elliston you'll see him there  
It's the Puffin of Newfoundland

He's black and white with great eyesight  
Can eat a fish in one big bite  
A powerful swimmer and swift in flight  
The Puffin of Newfoundland

The north Atlantic is his home  
But wintertime down south he'll roam  
Then every summer he'll come home  
The Puffin of Newfoundland

Now if you'd like a holiday  
With family and friends and games to play  
And arts and crafts and swimming all day  
Then I'd say Newfoundland

The people you'll meet are kind and sweet  
There are moose and whales and berries to eat  
And best of all you'll get to see  
The Puffin of Newfoundland

(Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8bIV2K0whkQ>. Please open link in full-screen mode.)

Check out more fun books at your local library or Newfoundland and Labrador Public Libraries website at [www.nlpl.ca](http://www.nlpl.ca)

For more information on early learning and child development, visit Department of Education's website at <https://www.gov.nl.ca/education/>.

## Activity Mat – Ideas for Use



### Defining Space

The Activity Mat:

- Easily defines your child's work space
- Is a great surface for playing with smaller objects
- Is best used for messy activities
- Can be wiped off and stored easily

### Many Uses

Makes a great surface for:

- Playing with modeling clay, painting, and drawing
- Placing puzzle pieces on
- Sorting collections (e.g., buttons, shells, and rocks)
- Drawing and creating

### Suggestions

- Consider using the activity mat for finger painting, collage activities, jigsaws, activities with beads or building blocks, loose parts play, art or construction projects, sensory experiences, or as a mini ramp space.
- Keep small baskets of materials nearby that can be used to store modeling clay activities (e.g., cookie cutters, child-sized scissors, rolling pins, and dinkies).
- Use the activity mat as a painting surface with or without paper.

### Play, Growth, and Development

Playing with clay or play dough, sorting materials and putting puzzles together helps in the fine motor physical development of children. As they use these materials, they are exercising their creativity and imagination skills. This helps them to learn as they play and engage in a variety of activities with different materials.

## Other Ideas...

### Playdough Recipe

#### Ingredients:

2 cups of flour (~500ml)  
1 cup of salt (~250 ml)  
3 tablespoons cooking oil (~50 ml)  
1 teaspoon cream of tartar (~5 ml)  
1 teaspoon food coloring (~5ml)  
2 cups of boiling water (~500ml)

#### Directions:

- Mix flour, salt, oil, and food coloring in a bowl
- Add boiling water
- Mix very well until lumps are removed
- Cool down
- Knead playdough until smooth (~10min)
- Store in air tight containers

### Fun things to do with modeling clay or playdough that help with the development of fine motor skills:

- Roll
- Pinch
- Press
- Mold
- Knead
- Cut with scissors
- Make forms & shapes

## Section 11- Other Information

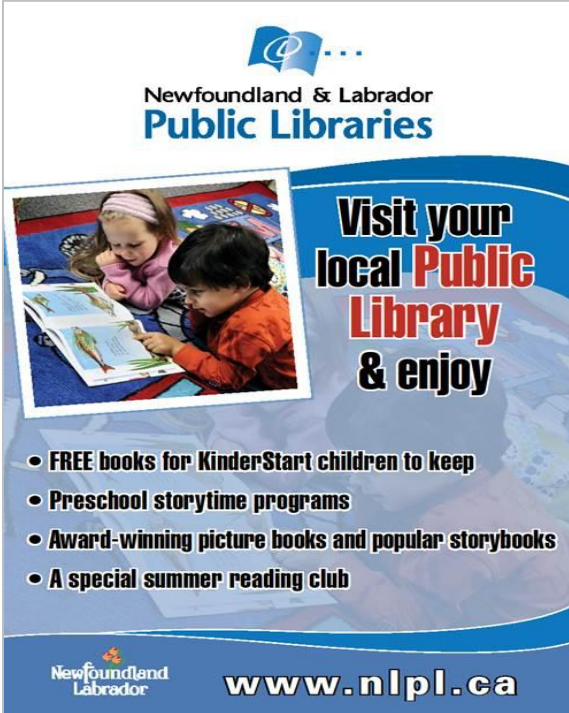
### Partnerships for Promoting Early Learning and Child Development

Multiple agencies, organizations, and service providers, such as the Department of Education; Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development; and Department of Health and Community Services, have responsibility for policy, programs, and services for children birth to age eight years with a broader early learning and child development focus. In addition to Government programs and services, early learning and child development is supported through other organizations and agencies such as Family Resource Centers (FRCs), Child Care Centres, Family Child Care, and Provincial Public Libraries.

**Family Resource Centres (FRCs)** are community-based organizations that deliver programs to promote positive parent-child interactions, improved child development, and increased community involvement to support families. They partner with various service providers to provide universal access to programs and services in communities. These programs are offered in various community settings and may be located in schools as well.

**The Literacy Connection** is an initiative offered by most of the provincial libraries. This program focuses on oral language and early literacy development for children three to five years old. The program involves interactive story-time sessions and other activities once a week for 6-12 weeks, two or three times a year.

**FREE BOOKS!** The Partnership between KinderStart/Bon départ and Newfoundland and Labrador Public Libraries allows children in KinderStart/Bon départ to receive two FREE books by presenting the coupon provided in KinderStart/Bon départ bag at any public library. Your child can visit the children's section of the library to get their own library card and learn about story-time programs at the library. If you are unable to visit a local library because of distance or other exceptional circumstances, contact the library nearest you to discuss how your child may receive the FREE books.



The graphic features the Newfoundland & Labrador Public Libraries logo at the top, which includes a stylized blue book icon. Below the logo is a photograph of two young children, a girl and a boy, sitting on the floor and looking at a large open book together. To the right of the photo, the text reads "Visit your local Public Library & enjoy". Below this text is a bulleted list of benefits: "FREE books for KinderStart children to keep", "Preschool storytime programs", "Award-winning picture books and popular storybooks", and "A special summer reading club". At the bottom left is the Newfoundland Labrador logo, and at the bottom right is the website address "www.nlpl.ca".

Newfoundland & Labrador  
**Public Libraries**

Visit your  
**local Public  
Library  
& enjoy**

- **FREE books for KinderStart children to keep**
- **Preschool storytime programs**
- **Award-winning picture books and popular storybooks**
- **A special summer reading club**

Newfoundland  
Labrador

**www.nlpl.ca**

## Did You Know?



A child who weighs less than 18 kilograms (40 pounds) should not ride on a school bus unless that bus is equipped with the appropriate child restraint system as set by the Highway Traffic Act.

**If your child is eligible to ride the school bus, but weighs less than 18 kilograms (40 pounds) at the start of Kindergarten, please inform the school administrator.**

For further information see the Highway Traffic Act:  
(<http://www.assembly.nl.ca/legislation/sr/statutes/h03.htm>).

**For more information on the KinderStart Program, please contact**

Early Learning and Child Development Division

Department of Education

E-mail: [KSBD@gov.nl.ca](mailto:KSBD@gov.nl.ca)



## Recommended Resources

### Well-Being & Belonging

<https://csepguidelines.ca/early-years-0-4/>

<https://www.participaction.com/en-ca/>

<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/health.html>

<http://www.child-encyclopedia.com/sites/default/files/docs/coups-oeil/parenting-skills-info.pdf>

<http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/>

<http://activeforlife.com/>

### Play and Exploration

<http://www.child-encyclopedia.com/Pages/PDF/PlayANGmcP.pdf>

<https://www.gov.nl.ca/eecd/earlychildhood/power/>

<https://www.zerotothree.org/early-learning/play>

<https://www.unicef.org/sites/default/files/2018-12/UNICEF-Lego-Foundation-Learning-through-Play.pdf>

<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/topics/play>

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/preschoolers/videos/play-helps-development>

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/preschoolers/videos>

### Exceptionalities

<https://www.understood.org/en/tools/through-your-childs-eyes>

<https://www.gov.nl.ca/eecd/k12/studentssupportservices/exceptionalities/>

### Social Contribution

<http://www.turnbackthetide.ca/>

<http://www.sciencekids.co.nz/recycling.html>

[http://www.earlychildhoodnews.com/earlychildhood/article\\_view.aspx?ArticleID=565](http://www.earlychildhoodnews.com/earlychildhood/article_view.aspx?ArticleID=565)

### Parental Engagement

[http://issuu.com/playwales/docs/role\\_of\\_adults\\_in\\_children\\_s\\_play?e=5305098/4082010](http://issuu.com/playwales/docs/role_of_adults_in_children_s_play?e=5305098/4082010)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nOhZ6U5yaXA>

<https://www.edcan.ca/articles/the-facts-on-education-how-does-parent-involvement-in-education-affect-childrens-learning/>

### Preschooler Behaviour & Development

<http://www.child-encyclopedia.com/behaviour>

[http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/your\\_childs\\_development](http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/your_childs_development)

<http://www.child-encyclopedia.com/information-sheets>

## Ideas for Play-based Early Learning Activities

### Well-Being & Belonging

#### **Thinking Cap**

**Material required** – Thick chart paper (coloured), glue, scissors, decorative material, and markers

**Instructions** – Cut the chart paper into a semi-circle. Pull the two corners to form a cone and glue it along the radii. Decorate it using beads, ribbons, glitter, stickers, etc. Write 'My Thinking Cap' on it.

**Use** – It helps the child feel special when they are thinking and doing things. It works as an incentive for children to get going and is equally a fun prop.

**Learning** – This activity promotes perseverance and positive behaviour.

#### **Crown**

**Material required** – Thick chart paper, decorative material, scissors, and glue.

**Instructions** – Cut a 6-inch wide strip from the chart paper. Cut a zigzag pattern along one of its lengths. Join the two widths of the strip using glue. Decorate it using beads/glitters/stickers.

**Use** – Use it as a reinforcement/fun item. Use it to count the spikes on the crown or simply the decorative materials on it (e.g., beads, stickers).

**Variations** – You can also make a sash using chart paper and decorative material. Write the child's name on it.

**Learning** – This activity promotes numeracy and recognition of letters and sounds.

#### **The Power of Yoga – Deep Breathing**

**Material required** – None

**Instructions** – Encourage your child to sit straight and relaxed with you. Guide them to focus on breathing and inhale deeply and slowly. Hold the breath for 2 seconds and exhale slowly. Repeat the process. Do this daily with the children for at least five minutes.

**Learning** – This activity promotes well-being, health, and positive energy in children and adults alike.

#### **Celebration/Birthday Calendar**

**Material required** – A Calendar, picture cutouts of family members, celebration/event-related pictures (e.g., Christmas), markers, and glue.

**Instructions** – Encourage your child to mark important days in the calendar– Christmas, Easter, birthdays/anniversaries of family members and friends, and paste their pictures.

**Learning** – This activity promotes social development, numeracy skills, and vocabulary.

## Play and Exploration

### **Spot the Difference**

**Material required** – Two comparable photographs of people/things/places.

**Instructions** – Discuss the details of the photo with your child.

**Use** – Work with them to spot differences between the two pictures. It is an open-ended interactive activity for children and parents/caregivers.

**Learning** – This activity promotes concentration, cognition, and language and communication.

### **Snow Colours**

**Material required** – Squeezy bottles, food colours, and water.

**Instructions** – Add a few drops of food colour into each bottle and fill them up with water.

**Use** – Use the coloured water to paint/write on snow.

**Learning** – This activity promotes creativity, fine motor skills; understanding of cause and effect (mixing two colours to get a new colour), seasons, and weather.

### **Play Dough – Recipe**

**Material required** – All-purpose flour (4 cups), food colour, water (1 cup), cooking oil (2-4 tbsp.), and salt (1.5 cups).

**Instructions** – Mix all ingredients in a bowl. Knead to form soft playdough.

**Use** – Use the playdough together to create different things that interest the child.

**Learning** – This activity promotes fine motor skills, creativity, and imagination.

### **I Spy Bag**

**Material required** – Re-sealable bag, tape, shredded coloured paper/sand, and foam shapes of different colours.

**Instructions** – Fill up the re-sealable bag half with shredded coloured paper/sand. Toss in foam shapes and seal it. Secure it with a tape.

**Use** – Take turns to find shapes by their colours in the bag.

**Learning** – This activity helps to develop fine-motor skills, improve concentration, self-control, social skills, and knowledge of shapes and colours.

### **Picture Puzzle**

**Material required** – An old photograph, craft sticks, glue, and knife.

**Instructions** – Paste craft sticks horizontally at the back of the photograph. Cut between the craft sticks to divide the photograph into pieces, each backed by a craft stick.

**Use** – Work with your child to put pieces of the picture puzzle together.

**Learning** – It develops manipulative skills, imagination, ability to see part and whole, fine motor skills, and eye-hand coordination.

### **What is the New Colour?**

**Material required** – Re-sealable bag, two different watercolours, and tape.

**Instructions** – Put the two colours in the re-sealable bag separately from each other. Make sure not to mix them yet. Secure it with a tape.

**Use** – Help the child to mix the two colours in the centre of the bag. Let the child guess what the new colour is.

**Variation** – Try different colours in different re-sealable bags to get 'new' colours.

**Learning** – This activity strengthens fine motor skills, knowledge of colours, and understanding of cause and effect (mixing two colours to make a new colour).

## **Early Literacy & Numeracy**

### **Rhyming Bingo**

**Material required** – 2-3 sheets of thick paper, pictures for simple and familiar rhyming words (cat-rat, sun-bun, ants-pants, etc.), glue, and pencil. Include pictures for 6-8 words initially.

**Instructions** – Take a sheet and paste a picture from each pair of rhyming words (cat, sun, ants, etc.) on it. Use other sheets to make bingo cards. On each card, paste the other picture from the pair of rhyming words (rat, bun, pants, etc.).

**Use** – Help the child to identify pictures on the picture grid. Show them bingo cards one at a time, asking them to identify the object and see if its name rhymes with the picture on the picture grid. Ask them to cross out its match on the grid.

**Variations** – You can devise a number bingo, sound bingo, or picture bingo and use it to play with the child or a group of children.

**Learning** – This activity helps to develop phonemic awareness, cognitive skills, and vocabulary.

### **Odd One Out**

**Material required** – 5-6 cups

**Instructions** – Place cups in a way that one of them is placed oddly.

**Use** – Encourage your child to find the odd one out.

**Variation** – Use small objects such as buttons of the same colour and size. Arrange them in 2-3 groups of two or three, and while doing so deliberately make a group with lesser objects. Ask your child to find the one that is different from the others.

**Learning** – This activity promotes cognitive skills, reasoning, and numeracy skills.

### **Labels**

**Material required** – Chart paper, scissors, markers, and tape.

**Instructions** – Cut the chart paper into cards and use them to label things in your house with their first letter.

**Use** – Emphasize the sounds of the letters as you talk to your child about them.

**Learning** – This activity helps to promote letter knowledge, recognition, and phonemic awareness.

### Match up

**Material required** – Thick chart paper, scissors, and pairs of identical stickers of shapes/colours/pictures such as cat, car, book, apple, etc. Use 4-5 pairs initially.

**Instructions** – Cut the chart paper into cards. Paste one sticker on each card.

**Use** – Jumble up the cards and lay them upside down in front of the child on a table. Take turns to flip the cards and match the shapes/colours/pictures. If you flip a card that matches an already flipped card, you get to keep both. The one who collects maximum cards wins. Help the child know what colour/shape/picture it is. This activity can be done with a group of children.

**Learning** – This activity helps to develop knowledge of colours and shapes, cognitive skills, social skills, and self-control.

### Squishy Bag – Recipe

**Material required** – Re-sealable bag (12”X11” or larger), tape, all-purpose flour (1 cup), water (1.5 cups), and food colour.

**Instructions** – Mix water, flour, and food colour to make a smooth paste. Put it in the re-sealable bag and flatten to remove all the air in the bag. Seal it and secure it with tape.

**Use** – Let the child draw/write on it with their finger.

**Learning** – This activity promotes literacy, numeracy, and fine motor skills.

### Pots of Gold

**Material required** – Three cups of different sizes, chart paper- black and golden, scissors, and glue.

**Instructions** – Paste black paper on the outer surface of the cups. Cut several coin-sized pieces from the golden paper.

**Use** – Arrange the cups in a line. Ask your child to follow your words for putting golden coins in the cups. Use words like ‘smallest cup’, ‘biggest cup’, ‘cup on the left’, ‘middle cup’, etc. You may later count coins in each cup.

**Learning** – This activity develops and promotes numeracy skills and the ability to see spatial relationships between objects.

### Rhyming Picture Dominoes

**Material required** – 4-5 craft sticks, rhyming pairs of picture stickers of objects and animals (e.g., car-star, duck-truck, and bell-shell).

**Instructions** – Paste a sticker on each end of the stick such that the two ends don’t rhyme with each other.

**Use** – Play with your child to name the pictures on the sticks. Arrange the craft sticks one after the other in a way to join the rhyming pictures.

**Learning** – This activity helps to develop and enhance phonological awareness, manipulative skills, and fine motor skills.

### **Play Platters – Sorting/Grouping**

**Material required** – 3-4 disposable plates, objects (e.g., buttons) of different colours.

**Instructions** – Ask your child to help you sort the objects as per colour.

**Variation** – You may extend this activity to include sizes, shapes, and counting the number of objects in each plate.

**Learning** – This activity helps in the recognition of colours/shapes/sizes; develops and enhances numeracy, sorting, and cognitive skills.

### **Shape Dominoes**

**Material required** – 8-10 craft sticks, glue, and 8-10 pairs of buttons (use different colours, shapes, and sizes).

**Instructions** – Paste a different button on each end of the craft stick.

**Use** – Join the ends with identical buttons one after the other to make different shapes with the sticks.

**Learning** – This activity helps to enhance the recognition of shapes, sizes, colours, creativity, and manipulative skills.

## **Communication**

### **Talking Puppet(s)**

**Material required** – An old pair of gloves, glue, chart paper, wiggly eyes, and markers.

**Instructions** – Wear the gloves and give each finger eyes and a face using markers. You can make a puppet for every finger if you like. Encourage the child to name every puppet. You may use chart paper to dress them.

**Use** – Use it for practicing communication skills and modelling social courtesies with the child. Ask the child to wear the glove and engage in communication with them. Encourage them to use new words and sentences. This activity can also be done with a group of children.

**Learning** – This activity helps to promote communication skills, social development, imagination, and creativity.

### **Treasure Hunt**

**Material required** – A little bag and goodies (e.g., small toys, packs of colours, or something new you bought for your child).

**Instructions** – Put all the goodies in the bag and hide it.

**Use** – Provide verbal cues, such as ‘on top of’, ‘under’, ‘behind’, ‘in front of’, ‘on the left of’ for your child to be able to find the hidden treasure. Try using a small area and a few easy cues first. Increase the level as your child progresses through. You may take turns to find the treasure. Encourage your child to give you hints to find it.

**Learning** – This activity enhances gross and fine motor skills, communication skills; the ability to follow instructions and see spatial relationships.

### **Binoculars**

**Material required** – Two empty toilet rolls and glue.

**Instructions** – Paste the rolls together along their length.

**Use** – Take turns with the child and encourage them to see through the binoculars and try to describe what they can see, for example, I spy something that is... [Name a color, shape or size describe an object using a few clues].

**Learning** – This activity helps to improve communication skills, ability to be descriptive, and creative with words.

### **Phoney Phone**

**Material required** – Two disposable paper cups, a string (about 2 meters long).

**Instructions** – Punch holes into the bottom of the cups. Pass the string through the hole at the bottom into the cup and tie a knot inside the cup. Now tie another knot at the bottom, outside the cup. Repeat the same process for the other cup.

**Use** – Encourage your child to use the phoney phone during pretend play.

**Learning** – This activity helps to develop language skills, social skills, and imagination.

### **Guess it**

**Material required** – None

**Instructions** – Think of some things your child is comfortable and familiar with. Play the game by giving hints and asking your child to guess it. You can include any concept such as parts of the body, fruits/vegetables, professionals (teachers/doctors/firemen) as per your child's level of comfort. Make sure that they have had some exposure to the concept you plan to include.

**Learning** – This activity helps to develop listening skills, cognitive skills, and vocabulary.

### **Cook up a Story**

**Material required** – 3-4 pictures from magazines, old storybooks, or family photos.

**Instructions** – Work with your child to think about what is happening in the pictures. When you feel your child is ready, construct a story using those pictures.

**Learning** – This open-ended activity stimulates imagination, creativity, and language skills.

## **Social Contribution**

### **Plant a Seed**

**Material required** – Re-sealable bag, Kidney beans, paper towels, and water.

**Instructions** – Stuff the re-sealable bag with wet paper towels. Put a kidney bean in the bag and cover it with a wet towel paper. Do not seal the bag completely.

**Use** – Talk to the child about plants and encourage them to observe the growth of



the seed into a sprout. Work together to transfer the little seedling into the flowerbed or pot. Encourage them to take care of it and water it. Watch together as it grows.  
**Learning** – This activity helps to develop and promote knowledge of ecology, growth, and measurement; inculcates a sense of responsibility.

### **Make some Signs**

**Material required** – 6"x 8" Cardboard, glue, white chart paper, markers, and tape.  
**Instructions** – Paste chart paper on the cardboard and draw some basic signs that you think you would like to talk to the child about (e.g., Recyclable, Danger, Exit, Proper washing of hands, Turn off Lights, Traffic lights, etc.)  
**Use** – Tape the signs in your house at the child's eye level to see. Talk to the child about the signs and keep adding more as they progress through. Model and encourage socially responsible behaviour.  
**Learning** – This activity helps to develop a sense of using symbols to represent ideas, caring for the environment, safety concepts, learn new vocabulary, and positive behaviour.

### **Best out of Waste – Fireworks Painting**

**Material required** – Chart paper, scissors, water, 3-5 colours, 3-5 empty toilet rolls, and 3-5 plates.  
**Instructions** – Cut vertically to create fringes of different lengths along the circular edge of the toilet rolls. Use a separate plate to mix each colour with water. Use different rolls for each colour.  
**Use** – Work with your child to create a fireworks image by dipping the frilly side of the roll in colour and dabbing it on the sheet. Do not dip the toilet rolls in colour for long as they may get soggy. Save this as your child's first painting.  
**Learning** – This activity promotes recognition of colours, fine motor skills, the concept of spacing and size, mixing of colours, creativity, and imagination.

## **Promoting Positive Behaviour**

### **Emoji Cup**

**Material required** – Chart paper, empty paper cup, markers, and scissors.  
**Instructions** – Cut chart paper into circles of 2" diameter. Draw emojis such as smiling, sad, angry, laughing, surprised, etc. on the circles. Put them all in the cup.  
**Use** – Take turns with the child to pick one emoji randomly from the cup. Enact it and talk about how you feel when you have the same emotions as the emoji. Guide the child to choose the right set of behaviour and attitude.  
**Learning** – This activity helps to develop and promote empathy, social responsibility, positive behavior, and self-awareness.

### **Pass around the Microphone**

**Material required** – Empty toilet roll, aluminum foil.

**Instructions** – Cover the roll with aluminum foil. Make a ball using foil and tape it to the top of the roll to make a pretend microphone.

**Use** – Take turns to speak using the microphone. Encourage children to be good listeners while waiting for their turn to speak. This activity can be done with a group of children.

**Learning** – This activity helps to promote social development, language skills, self-control, and the ability to follow instructions.

### **Simon Says**

**Material required** – None

**Instructions** – Explain the rules of the game to your child. Start the game with commands using 'Simon says' and then begin mixing commands without 'Simon says'. Use commands such as 'hop three times', 'jump two steps forward', 'go three steps backward', 'turn around twice', 'hop on one foot', 'move your arms in circles', 'wiggle your index finger', etc.

**Learning** – This activity promotes social development, the ability to follow instructions, self-control, numeracy skills, fine and gross motor skills, agility, and coordination.

## KinderStart Child Information Form

Dear Parent/Caregiver or Guardian,

Your child was born ready to learn, and the love and guidance that you provide your child can set them on the way to many years of success in school. Children gain the skills necessary for 'school readiness' well before they start school.

This form guides you through the process of sharing what you know about your child with one of the teachers who may be with your child in the new school year. It gives you the opportunity to pass on important information about your child's likes and dislikes, strengths and needs, and any concerns that you may have to your child's kindergarten teacher. If your child is receiving any special services, the information that you provide here can help to ensure the school works as part of the team to help your child transition successfully into the new school year.

Any information contained within this form can be reviewed and discussed with your child's kindergarten teacher during the KinderStart program. The information within this form will not be shared publically.



CHILD'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

**BASIC INFORMATION**

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You may attach a  
photo of your  
child

Name(s) of person(s) completing this form: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

Child likes to be called: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Mother/Father/Guardian name: \_\_\_\_\_

Father/Mother/Guardian name: \_\_\_\_\_

Other adult(s) living in the home: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Mother/Father/Guardian's address/contact information if different from above:

Father/Mother/Guardian's address/contact information if different from above:

If child does not reside with one or both parent/caregivers, who is the legal guardian?

- Mother  Father  Joint Custody  Other

Please provide details:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## ABOUT MY CHILD

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My child's favorite things:

Food \_\_\_\_\_

Color \_\_\_\_\_

Toy \_\_\_\_\_

Expression \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

My child is good at:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

During free time my child prefers to:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

My child likes to (check all that apply):

- Listen to stories
- Draw and color
- Play alone
- Play with other children
- Play outside
- Play quiet games inside
- Go to a friend's house
- Other favorite activities: \_\_\_\_\_

My child doesn't like to:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



I'd like you to know this about my child:

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My child learns best by:

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When my child is upset, the following helps calm him/her:

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My child sleeps well/has a regular bedtime routine:

Yes

No

#### ABOUT MY CHILD'S EARLY LEARNING EXPERIENCES AT AGE 4

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My child is not enrolled in any program

My child has participated in:

Preschool Program. Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Child Care Centre. Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Family Child Care Home

Early Literacy Programs (i.e. Early Literacy Foundations, Library Story-Time Programs). Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Family Resource Centre Programming

Regular opportunities to play with other children close in age

In organized sports and activities. Please list:

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## ABOUT OUR FAMILY



We speak the following languages in our home:

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Most of the time, I speak \_\_\_\_\_ (indicate language spoken) to my child.

Most of the time my child speaks \_\_\_\_\_ (indicate language spoken) to me.

Some of the things I'd like you to know about my family (culture, activities that the family enjoys doing together, other):

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There are \_\_\_\_\_ children in the home. Their names are:

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My family would like to share the following skills or activities with our child's class or school:

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## SCREENINGS AND SPECIAL SERVICES

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My child had a hearing screening on: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

My child had a vision screening on: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

My child had speech screening on: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

My child had other screening(s) on: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## MY CHILD RECEIVES SUPPORT AND SPECIAL SERVICES

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- My child does not receive any special services.
- My child receives special services as indicated below:

Type of Service	Received last year ✓	Receives this year ✓	Amount of time per week
Occupational Therapy (OT)			
Physical Therapy (PT)			
Speech and Language (S/L)			
Social Worker			
Early Intervention			

I would like you to observe my child because I am concerned about the following:

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**Thank you for getting to know my child!**

**We want to work with you to ensure a successful Kindergarten year.**

Signature(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



Learning Starts with Play.

that's the  
Power  
of Play!

  
Newfoundland  
Labrador  
[gov.nl.ca/edu](http://gov.nl.ca/edu)