



# Ready, Set, Learn

## School District 64 Gulf Islands

### The Preschool Years

“Play is important for children. Play is the major way young children learn about themselves and others. During the first five years, children need parents and caregivers to provide opportunities for play and at times to join in with the child in joyful, free, spontaneous moments of fun.”

*(Primary Program)*

“Play...

- enhances a child’s language development
- encourages creativity and problem solving
- provides a context for the development of representational thought
- develops higher motivation to learn
- develops higher self-esteem”

*(Garvey, Dansky, Vygotsky, Weininger)*



## Social/Emotional Development and the Development of Social Responsibility

### Try to ensure that your child has...

- plenty of opportunities to interact with other children in unstructured play situations, which encourage sharing and cooperating
- been left in the care of people other than family
- the chance to try new activities and explore new things and ideas
- the opportunity to develop independence in making age-appropriate choices and decisions
- time to discuss concerns about going to school
- been encouraged to take responsibility for their actions, and been expected to understand the consequences of their behaviour

*Plan ahead. Experience tells us that some children (especially some with autumn birthdays) do well to wait until the following calendar year to start elementary school. Your child's preschool teacher, child care provider or future Kindergarten teacher can help you with this decision.*





## **Intellectual Development**

### ***Show your child that learning is fun...***

You are essential to your child's academic learning. Please help by ensuring that your child is read to daily, knows some nursery rhymes, and has lots of opportunities for conversation with a variety of people of all ages. "Oral language is the foundation of literacy learning. Reading and writing are meaningful because they represent and extend the oral language system." (*Fountas and Pinnell*)



### ***Try to provide opportunities to...***

- listen and follow simple instructions
- finish tasks that he/she has started

### ***Encouraging early writing...***

- engage your child in "pretend" writing (e.g. a letter, grocery list)
- use finger paints, sidewalk chalk, sticks in the sand, etc. to "write" words (your child's name is a great way to get started with "writing" practice)

### ***Encouraging early reading...***

- look for environmental print (e.g. road signs, favourite cereal names)
- discuss words on grocery items (connect to the picture)
- alphabet magnets on the fridge
- alphabet soup, alphabet pretzels
- singing the alphabet (e.g. when washing hands)

The above activities help your child develop a sense that they are "readers" and "writers". Modeling reading and writing as often as possible yourself also helps your child establish an understanding of the purpose of print.

### ***Encourage early science and math skills...***

- look for patterns and shapes in nature (leaves, stones pine cones) and patterns in your environment
- make patterns with toys such as blocks, in sequences, such as red, blue, red, blue

Estimate! Ask questions like "I wonder how many..

Make a guess... Let's see....

Playing with sand and water, your child will learn measurement, conservation



and mathematical language such as more, less, heavier, lighter, half full, etc.

-talk about big, bigger, biggest, tall and short, wide and narrow, thin and thick...

-practice position words by having a treasure hunt -follow clues that use over, under, above, below, next to, beside

-play shape tickle -draw a shape on your child's back so that he/she can identify them.

-Build with blocks. Do puzzles. Play shape "I Spy" Play board games.

-spend lots of time outdoors



## Artistic and Aesthetic Development

Again we see that play is extremely important to a child's learning and well-being. Help your child develop his/her creativity by engaging in imaginative play, singing, moving, dancing, building, drawing, painting, modeling, arts and crafts activities.

"Play is an integral part of a child's being. It is the business of childhood, and it has a unique and vital role in the whole educational process." (Weininger)



## ***Household activities that help prepare children for school are...***

- cooking snacks and meals (*to introduce concepts such as measuring, temperature and time*)
- putting things away (*to help develop organizational skill and responsibility*)
- arranging and sorting household items, such as laundry, nails, groceries and setting the table (*to help develop math and language skills*)
- playing games with words and numbers
- reading daily, drawing often, looking for print in the environment (*stop signs, store names, etc.*)
- talking about a variety of subjects, using complete sentences and questions
- caring for plants and animals
- ask What do you see? What would happen if..Can you tell my why?....

## **Playdough Recipe**

4 cups flour ( and almost one more later)

1 cup salt

6 T alum

Mix in bowl.

Add food colouring.

4 T. oil

Add 4 cups boiling water. Stir well and then work in enough flour so that Playdough is not sticky.

Let cool a little but let children play with warm playdough. ( and you too) It feels great.

## **Helpful Phone Numbers**

Community Health Nurse 538-4880

Lady Minto Hospital 538-4800

Speech and Hearing Clinic (250) 388-2250

Saltspring Community Centre 537-9971

Family Place 537-9176

B.C. Nurse Line 811

Poison Information Centre 1-800-567-8911

School District 64 Early Learning Program info. 537-5548 ext.608

**Ready, Set, Learn is a B.C. Ministry of Education  
Early Learning Initiative**