

Preschool learning tips

Reading & Writing

- Begin reading to your child from birth.
- Sing songs, play rhyming games (“I Spy...”), label and describe things, e.g., “That’s a bulldozer. It pushes dirt.”
- Read books that have lots of repetition, e.g., The Three Little Pigs. Encourage your child to join in.
- Draw attention to words in your child’s everyday environment, e.g., read signs, cereal boxes, shopping lists, etc.
- When reading books, first look at the book cover and predict what the story will be about, e.g., “I think...” “I wonder...” Next look at the pictures, talk about them and then read the story.
- Make reading fun by changing your voice, e.g., loud, soft, silly.
- Talk about how the pictures help to tell the story, e.g., “I can see that the wolf is trying to blow down the house.”
- Talk about the story after you have read it, e.g., “Tell me your favourite part of the story.” “Tell me why you liked... (character’s name, setting).”
- Re-read your child’s favourite stories as many times as your child wants to hear them!
- Write stories, letters, notes, lists, and make books together. Talk about what you’re doing and why. Be sure to let your child see you writing for many different reasons.
- Print familiar words, e.g., your child’s name, Mom, Dad, love, etc.

Numbers & Math

- Draw attention to numbers in your child’s everyday environment, e.g., grocery stores, street signs, licence plates, telephones.
- Play card games and board games.
- Involve your child in daily activities that are “rich” in math, such as shopping, cooking/baking (measuring), and counting place settings for the dinner table.
- Do puzzles together.
- Practice writing numbers with fun things! Try bingo dabbers, pudding on a plate, clay, etc.
- Sort everyday objects, such as socks and plastic containers, into groups by colour, size, or shape.
- Estimate and measure water, rice, sand, and other materials using different sized containers.
- Count things forwards and backwards, e.g., stairs, buttons on shirts, etc. include math concepts and language while playing e.g., “I’m adding this car to my pile. Now, I have 3.” “I put the blue box under the red box.”
- Sing counting songs (e.g., “This Old Man...”) and read counting books.
- Talk about directions, street signs, familiar landmarks, etc., when going for a walk or a car ride with your child.



How is your child's speech & language development?

Words in Bloom

Children will learn to talk by imitating others, but what if your child is not developing his communication skills as fast as he should?

Words in Bloom is a preschool speech and language program for children up to the age of five. Speech and language pathologists will work with your child to improve his communication skills. Early detection of a speech or language development problem is often the key to successful treatment. The sooner a child's delays are corrected, the sooner he can meet his age-appropriate milestones.



How do I know if I should call?

Use the checklist provided here. If you see that your child does not have all the skills listed for his/her age, you are encouraged to refer your child for a screening right away. You do not need a doctor's referral; for more information about this program or to refer your child for services, call **613-933-1375** or **1 800 267-7120** and ask for the Health Line

Speech and Language Checklist

Your 18 month old should:

- use a vocabulary of 10 to 50 spoken words
- understand simple directions or questions like "Where is your nose?"
- use connected sounds (jargon) that sounds like sentences in a foreign language

Your 24 month old should:

- use 50 to 250 words and combine 2 words like "No nap"
- follow two step directions like "Go get your coat and your boots"
- point to pictures in a book when asked a question like "Where is the cat?"

Your 3 year old should:

- use phrases with 2 to 3 words, such as "Want juice" or "Mommy go now"
- use plurals to indicate that there is more than one
- follow longer two- to three-step directions

Your 4 year old should:

- say more words correctly but may have difficulty with r, th, ch, sh, j and v sounds
- use sentences with 4 or more words
- ask what, where, who and why questions

Fuel up for fun & learning

Healthy Eating provides children with the energy and nutrients needed to grow, develop, and learn. When your child starts the day with a healthy breakfast he/she will be able to concentrate and perform better at school. Early childhood is an important time for children to learn to enjoy a variety of foods and to help them form lifelong health-promoting habits. Healthy food also fuels your child for active play which is a child's source of joy, self-expression, imagination and learning. When your child participates in regular physical activity, he/she will develop social skills and the ability to concentrate, memorize, create, problem solve and deal with emotions.

During the preschool years, growth slows causing a drop in appetite. At this age, children may be more interested in playing than eating. Children are born with the ability to know when they are hungry and when they are full.



Healthy eating involves decisions and choices by you and your child.

Adults decide...

when to eat
what to eat
where to eat

Children decide...

Whether to eat
How much to eat (respect your child's appetite)

Tips to encourage active play

- Create an environment that supports physical activity: indoors and outside, e.g., space to dance or play at the playground.
- Take part in your child's activities. A child's self-esteem and skills improve when adults take part in their play.
- Dress your child in comfortable clothing that allows free movement, is appropriate for the weather, and that can get dirty.
- Praise and encourage your child on things he/she does well. This will help your child to feel good about himself/herself and about being active.
- Offer a wide variety of activities that are enjoyable and non-competitive.

Tips to encourage healthy eating

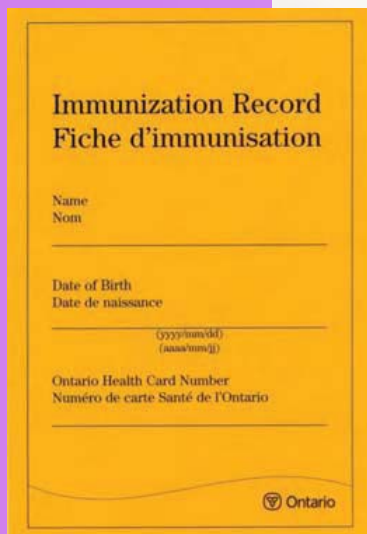
- Offer a variety of food from the four food groups of Canada's Food Guide (www.canadasfoodguide.org).
- Have available ready-to-eat snacks such as fresh fruit, yogurt, vegetables & dip, and low-sugar cereals with milk.
- Be patient. If your child doesn't eat certain foods, try again another time.
- Involve your child in food & meal preparation (eg. mix batter, tear lettuce, set table).
- Avoid using food as a reward or punishment.
- Meal time is a chance for you and your family to spend quality time together. Have a healthy family meal without TV or other distractions, but with cheerful conversation.
- Be a good role model. If you eat healthy your children are more likely to

For more information, visit www.eohu.ca or www.cscestrie.on.ca or call health line at 1-800-267-7120

Vaccinate your child



Immunization (also called vaccination, baby shots, or needles) is the best protection against many serious childhood diseases like whooping cough, diphtheria, tetanus, measles, mumps, and rubella, to name a few. For immunization to work best, children must have all their vaccinations – on time. Report your child’s vaccinations to the Eastern Ontario Health Unit at 613-764-2841 or 1-800-267-7120 and ask for the Health Line. In the event that you misplace your child’s record or there is an outbreak of an infectious disease in the community, your child’s vaccination information is available by contacting Health Line.



Vaccinate your child on time!

Each time your child receives a vaccine, notify the Eastern Ontario Health Unit by calling and asking for the Health Line;

613-764-2841

or

1-800-267-7120

www.eohu.ca

Did you Know...

Did you know your child can be vaccinated at the Eastern Ontario Health Unit immunization clinics, the Watch Me Grow program in your local Ontario Early Years Centre. Call Health Line or your local Early Years Centre.

Casselman 613 764-3434

Embrun 613 443-1614

Hawkesbury 613 632-6959

Rockland 613 446-4220

Alexandria 613 525-3163

1 866 764-3434

Choosing quality child care

One of the most important decisions parents have to make is choosing the child care program in which their child will be placed. Research indicates that a quality child care program increases a child's readiness to learn whether it be centre based or home based.



Consider these tips when choosing a child care program.

Does the child care program have:

- *A posted license under the Day Nurseries Act?*
- *A feeling that when you visit children and staff are happy?*
- *An “open door” policy, which invites you to visit at any time?*
- *Opportunities for you to participate in the program?*
- *A bright and cheerful feeling?*
- *A variety of equipment and furnishings that are safe, age-appropriate and cleaned regularly?*
- *Consistent routines that are developmentally appropriate and posted for you to see and your child to participate in every day?*
- *A healthy menu plan which is posted?*
- *Tools to regularly evaluate the program and assess children's developmental strengths and needs?*
- *Regular program feedback opportunities such as parent surveys?*
- *Clear policies and consistent practices for things such as managing children's behaviour, emergencies, hours, and fees?*
- *Other parents you can talk to about the program?*
- *Early Childhood Educators who have postsecondary training?*

Parent Information Package

The aim of the Parent Information package is to assist parents in their search for quality childcare. The Ontario Early Years Centre can provide you with a list of licensed childcare centres and unlicensed child care providers. **The Ontario Early Years Centre neither screens, interviews, assesses nor takes responsibility for the quality of child care provided in our registry**, however, the information provided in the package will help you make an informed decision. We stress the importance for you, the parent or guardian to take the responsibility to visit and assess each caregiver, her/his home or centre and to follow-up by checking references given to you.

For more information on licensed child care centres in your are, please visit www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/finding.html

For information regarding child care fee subsidy, please call the City of Cornwall Child Care Services Department at (613) 933-6282 ext. 3310

The Canadian Child Care Federation provides information to assist you in making a quality child care choice. For more information visit their web site at www.cccf-fcsge.ca

Child health checklist

Has your child:	Information for parents:
<input type="checkbox"/> Had his or her eyes checked between the ages of 2 and 4?	Signs of vision difficulty include: complaints of tired eyes or not seeing well; frequent eye rubbing; blinking; squinting; head tilting; difficulty coping; holding a book close to the face. For more information, speak to your doctor or go to www.optom.on.ca .
<input type="checkbox"/> visited the dentist during the preschool years (2-4 years), preferably by the first birthday?	Financial assistance may be available through the Children in Need of Treatment (CINOT) program. Call 613 764-2841/613 446-1400/613 632-4355 or 1-800-267-7120
<input type="checkbox"/> developed the habit of good oral hygiene practices -, brushing teeth and flossing daily?	Baby teeth are important for proper speech development. When brushing, use a pea-sized amount of toothpaste and ask your child not to swallow it.
<input type="checkbox"/> had a physical check-up in the last year and received his/her most recent immunization shot?	See "Vaccinate your child" included in this information package for more information on immunization and your child.
<input type="checkbox"/> had his or her hearing tested by an audiologist?	Consult a doctor for a referral to an audiologist if your child complains of hearing difficulty, speaks too loudly, needs direction repeated many times, often does not pay attention, or has had repeated ear infections.
<input type="checkbox"/> developed the habit of starting every day with a healthy breakfast?	Consult a doctor for a referral to an audiologist if your child complains of hearing difficulty, speaks too loudly, needs direction repeated many times, often does not pay attention, or has had repeated ear infections.
<input type="checkbox"/> developed a routine that includes a regular bedtime and at least 10-12 hours of sleep each night?	Healthy sleep will allow your child to grow, develop, and function at his/her best. The quality of sleep is just as important as the quantity. Getting adequate sleep affects performance, concentration, and learning.
<input type="checkbox"/> developed a routine that includes at least 90 minutes of physical activity throughout the day?	Parents are the best role models for leading an active and healthy life. For more information about Canada's Physical Activity guide, visit www.paguide.com .
<input type="checkbox"/> learned about safety?	Visit www.safekids.ca to learn about safety and your child.
<input type="checkbox"/> met the development milestones for his or her age?	Complete the four year old Nippissing District Developmental Screen near the end of this information package. Visit the website at www.ndds.ca for more information and to view other checklists from 1 month to 6 years of age.

Support your school-aged child

Starting school, becoming more independent - this is an exciting time of life! Every child has differences in temperament, emotional, social and intellectual development. Recognizing this and adapting to it goes a long way to reducing conflicts with your child. Each family member still plays a huge role as you continue to help your child discover and build on their unique qualities and talents. Here are some tips to help you strengthen your relationship with your school-aged child.



Source: Best Start school readiness working group

Communicate your love to your child in words and actions everyday – hugs, kisses and pats on the back are great!

Listen for the feelings behind your child’s words and respond to those feelings in an accepting way. Help your child to put a name to feelings and learn to express them appropriately. Teach your child to say “I feel angry” rather than “You make me mad”.

Model and teach kindness, respect, consideration of others including honesty, responsibility, sharing, taking turns and forgiveness.

Have clear, enjoyable routines. This helps your child understand family expectations and values.

Encourage independence, allowing your child to do as much as possible for him/herself.

Teach safety rules and keep a watchful eye, ready with help when needed.

Praise your child’s efforts to do well regardless of the results.

Encourage creativity and a love for learning by reading with your child daily and exploring the world together. A visit to the museum is great fun!

Every day give your child opportunities to make simple choices and decisions. Help him/her to learn to solve problems and settle conflicts peacefully.

Use positive discipline. Mistakes are opportunities for learning. Instead of just saying “No”, teach them how you want them to act and why. Be consistent in enforcing limits and rules.

Remember to enjoy and laugh with your child! Look at life through your child’s eyes and with a sense of humour!

How long must my child stay home when sick

Chickenpox	For mild illness (low fever, less than 30 spots) – no exclusion as long as your child is well enough to participate normally in all activities; for moderate to severe illness (fever over 38.5°C and/or many new spots) – until 5 days after onset of rash.
Diarrhea	Until 24 hours after stools are formed. This may vary depending on cause of illness and the way the disease is spread.
Fifth's disease "Slapped Cheek"	Until your child is feeling well enough to participate normally in all activities (no need to stay away from others). Exclusion is not required because no longer contagious once rash appears.
Hand/Foot/Mouth disease	Until your child is feeling well enough to participate normally in all activities. Those with mouth sores or oozing lesions should stay away from others.
Impetigo	Until the antibiotic prescribed by a doctor has been taken for at least 24hrs or until sores are completely scabbed over.
Measles	For at least four days after the rash appears.
Pink-eye	Until the antibiotic prescribed by a doctor has been taken for at least 24hrs.
Rubella (German Measles)	Until at least seven days after the rash first appears.
Strep Throat	Until the antibiotic prescribed by a doctor has been taken for at least 24hrs.
Whooping Cough (Pertussis)	Until antibiotic treatment has been taken for at least five days. If no treatment is given, wait 3 weeks from onset of illness.



Keep your child home and away from others if he or she has any of these symptoms:

- *Fever
- *Diarrhea
- *Rash
- *Vomiting
- *Frequent coughing or sneezing
- * Yellow or green discharge from the nose, ears or eyes.
- *Sore throat

Contact your family doctor for diagnosis. He or she will advise you about care and treatment if a communicable disease is diagnosed.

For more information, please call 613 764-2841 or 1-800-267-7120 and ask for Health Line or visit our website at www.eohu.ca

It's booster seat time

The law requires booster seats for children who have outgrown a child car seat but are too small to use seatbelt alone.



A child can start using a seatbelt alone once *any one* of the following criteria is met:

- child turns eight years old
- child weighs 36 kg (80 lbs.)
- child is 145 cm (4 feet 9 inches) tall.



A lap and shoulder combination belt must be used with all booster seats. Your child's head must be supported by the top of the booster, vehicle seat or headrest. The shoulder strap must lie across the child's shoulder (not the neck or face) and middle of the chest, and the lap belt must cross low over the hips (not the stomach/abdomen). Never use seatbelt adjusters.

For more information, visit www.eohu.ca and or Ministry of transportation at www.mto.gov.on.ca , 1-800-668-4686.
You can also contact your local Ontario Early Years Centre at 1-866-996-0499

Parenting a Child With Special Needs

Children and families go through many changes as they grow up. These times of change are often called transitions. Children face many changes throughout their lives, but major transitions occur when they enter kindergarten, when they become a teen, and later when they become an adult. Starting a new program, working with new agencies and care providers, and making new friends are just some of the changes that lie ahead. To get ready for these changes, planning must start early, be real, and positive with shared expectations and hope for the future.

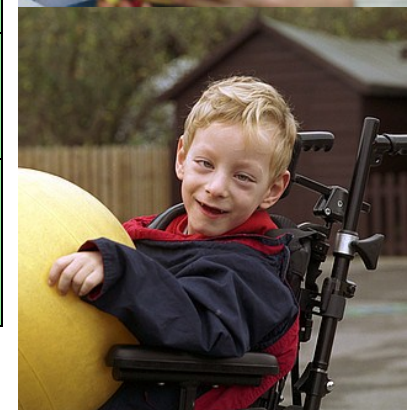
As a parent of a child with special needs, you may be caught up in day to day survival. You may ask, “How can I think about tomorrow when I’m just trying to make it through today?” When you are able to catch your breath, it is helpful to be aware of those transitions and to allow yourself to think about the future.

Here are some suggestions and tips that might help you and your family start thinking about the future. They will give you ideas to help your child become more independent with their health care and other areas of life. All children should be encouraged to do their personal best. Although children’s abilities will vary, do not underestimate them. As a parent, have expectations for your child and encourage your child to expect the best from themselves.

Depending on your child’s level of development, the following strategies may be helpful:

Making choices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give your child choices so they learn to make decisions • Teach your child the consequences of their behaviours and choices
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get involved in community activities that include children with and without special needs • Talk with parents of children with and without special needs • Take your child to playgrounds, parks, and playgroups
Self-Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach your child everyday skills like brushing their teeth • Teach your child self-care skills related to their special needs • Give your child chores that match their abilities
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When registering your child for school, request a case conference to best plan your child’s educational and health needs • Keep a record of your child’s education history
Medical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop good working relationships with doctors and health care providers • Keep a record of your child’s medical history • Teach your child what their disability is called • Teach your child about their special needs

Please speak to your health care provider about available resources and services to support you in providing care to your child with special needs.





Parental Education

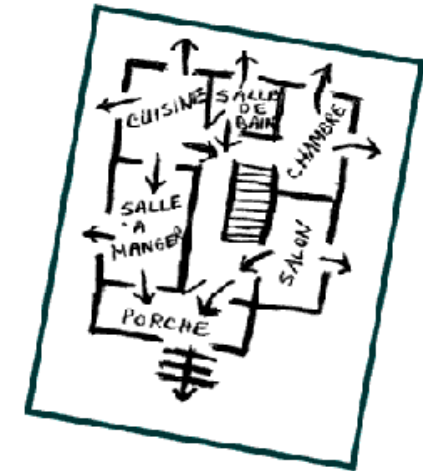


Tips

1. When your child wants to show you something, stop what you are doing and pay attention to your child. It is important to spend frequent, small amounts of time with your child doing things that you both enjoy.
2. Give your child lots of physical attention; children like hugs, cuddles and holding hands.
3. Talk to your child about things they are interested in and share aspects of your day with your child.
4. Give your child lots of descriptive praise when they do something you would like to see more of. For example, "Thank you for doing what I asked right away."
5. Children are more likely to misbehave when they are bored so provide lots of engaging indoor and outdoor activities for your child such as play dough, colouring, cardboard boxes, dress ups, blanket tents, etc.
6. Teach your child new skills by first showing the skill yourself, then giving your child opportunities to learn the new skill. For example, speak politely to each other in the home. Then prompt your child to speak politely (e.g. say "please" or "thank you"), and praise your child for their efforts (e.g. "Thank you for using your polite words".)
7. Set clear limits on your child's behaviour. Sit down and have a family discussion on the rules in your home. Let your child know what the consequences will be if they break the rules. Rules should be few, fair, easy to follow, enforceable, and positively stated (e.g. Stay close to dad in the store; Use a pleasant voice; Wash your hands before meals.)
8. If your child misbehaves stay calm and give them clear instruction to stop misbehaving and tell them what you would like them to do instead. (e.g. "Stop throwing. Play with the truck on the ground.") Praise your child if they stop (e.g. "Thank you for playing with the truck on the ground.")
9. Have realistic expectations. All children misbehave at times and it is inevitable that you will have some discipline hassles. Trying to be the perfect parent can set you up for frustration and disappointment.
10. Look after yourself. It is difficult to be a calm, relaxed parent if you are stressed, anxious or depressed. Try to find time every week to let yourself unwind or do something that you enjoy.

www.tripleontario.ca Join our parenting groups!

For more information, please call Valoris for Children and Adults of Prescott-Russell at 1-800-675-6168.



Smoke detectors save lives!

You can minimize your family's risk of fire-related injury or death by installing the right number of smoke detectors in the right places in your home, and by keeping them all in good working order.

- ◇ Install smoke detectors outside each bedroom and sleeping area, and on each level of your home, including the basement.
- ◇ Make sure the smoke detectors in your home have the ULC stamp of approval on the product and packaging.
- ◇ Read and follow every step of the manufacturer's directions when you install your smoke detectors.
- ◇ Follow the manufacturer's directions for testing and cleaning your smoke detectors.
- ◇ Change the batteries as often as recommended by the manufacturer.
- ◇ Never "borrow" batteries from your smoke detectors for some other device.
- ◇ Replace any smoke detector that is more than ten years old.

It is also a good idea to develop a "family escape plan" in case of fire in your home. Practice the plan and make sure your children understand what they should do if they hear warning sounds from smoke detectors. The escape plan should include a meeting point outside the home.

All Babies Cry... What To Do?

Caring for a crying baby can cause frustration and anger, which is perfectly normal. Unfortunately, some parents and caregivers shake their baby, which can have devastating consequences for the baby. It is therefore important for parents and caregivers to recognize their frustration and anger so they can take appropriate and safe steps.

What can parents do to cope?

Here are some tips to help you cope while your baby is crying:

- listen to gentle music
- take slow and deep breaths
- count to 10, 20, or 30
- ask your partner or another trusted person to care for your baby for a little while
- if this is not possible, put your baby in a safe place and walk away for a short period
- call someone



What can parents do to soothe a crying baby?

Here are some tips to help soothe your crying baby:

- feed your baby
- burp your baby
- change your baby's diaper
- give your baby a lukewarm bath
- massage your baby
- make eye contact and smile
- kiss your baby
- sing softly
- hum in a low tone against your baby's head
- run a vacuum cleaner

To help you relax and release your frustration:

- listen to music
- take a warm bath
- watch television
- exercise
- take a nap
- engage in a hobby
- volunteer
- keep a journal
- seek professional help if needed

If you feel you might hurt your baby, put your baby down in a safe place and call for support

Eastern Ontario Health Unit: 613-933-1375/1-800-267-7120

Valoris for children and adults of Prescott-Russell: 613-673-5148/1-800-675-6168

These tips were taken from Period of Purple Crying® – A New Way To Understand Your Baby's Crying (2012).

To find more information and several other helpful tips, visit www.purplecrying.info and www.caringforkids.cps.on

Reference: Period of Purple Crying® – A New Way To Understand Your Baby's Crying (2012). Retrieved August 9, 2012 from www.purplecrying.info

Getting ready for junior kindergarten and kindergarten

The parent is the first and most important teacher of the child. Starting school is a big step in your child's life. This is an exciting time when the child discovers many things for the first time. Children often have both haste and fear of starting school. Talk about what it means to go to school, encourage your child to express her fears and hurries

Activities and the following suggestions will help prepare your child for school:

In school children can:

- make various choices (e.g., Choose classroom activities, materials to be used).
- share equipment and space with other children.
- adapt to new people and routines.
- dressing independently to go to recess and to go home
- communicate their needs to other children and adults.
- see adults and other children write for different reasons. Children use a variety of materials to write (pencils, markers and crayons).
- listen to stories, rhymes, poems, and informative books. They will hold, see and read books

Home to prepare your child, you can:

- help your child make choices at home (e.g., choosing clothes, activities to do).
- give your child the opportunity to be with other children, learn to share, wait and wait his/her turn.
- propose your child new activities (e.g. going to the library to listen to a story). Explain the activity in question before undertaking it. React positively to encourage the adaptation efforts.
- encourage your child to put on his/her coat alone, snow pants, the zipper handle and buttonholes. With several children in the same classroom, teachers do not have the time to help each child.
- encourage your child to express in words what he/she wants to communicate or solve a problem (e.g., ask for a drink, go to the toilet alone, and ask for help).
- encourage interest in writing (e.g., make drawings, maps and posters). Talk about his/her given name, family name and letters that make them up. Encourage him/her to write his/her name and to recognize it, congratulate him/her.
- tell stories and say nursery rhymes (alphabet, colors, and numbers), poems and rhymes in French. Read to your child every day and talk about images in the books, ideas, words and letters. Show him/her the words, numbers and sign posters in your community. Go to the library and borrow different kinds of books.

Activities and the following suggestions will help prepare your child for school:

In school children can

- explore things in their natural habitat.
- learn numbers, shapes, patterns, sorting, estimation and measurement, and share their observations.
- create images, structures, music, songs and rhymes and play in small shows.
- use various materials and equipment to develop large and small muscles.
- take the bus to get to school and back home.

Home to prepare your child, you can:

- talk about things your child sees or hears during your walks or traveling. Show the changes that occur (e.g., seasons, growth, construction work).
- ask your child to help you sort the toys, clothing and grocery by colors (blue, red, yellow and green). When you cook, tell him/her the quantity you need and let him/her fill the quantities and pour ingredients. Talk about shapes (triangle, circle, square and rectangle) and patterns in your environment. Play with your child, look for similarities and count the cars for example (up to 10), play card games and board games for children.
- encourage him/her to use his/her imagination through drawings, construction or body movement while listening to music or playing the role of a character in books.
- give him/her the opportunity to exercise and develop large muscles (e.g., running, climbing, ball games) and small muscles (e.g., coloring, drawings, modeling pastes).
- have a bus outing to familiarize your child with his transport if he/she should take it to go to school.