



*Let's Get  
Ready!*



# *A Family's Guide to Supporting Kindergarten Readiness*



**OFFICE OF EARLY LEARNING**  
NC Department of Public Instruction

*A resource developed by the  
Office of Early Learning,  
North Carolina Department  
of Public Instruction.*

# *Let's Get Ready!*

## *A Family's Guide to Supporting Kindergarten Readiness*

A child's first school experience is a monumental occasion for both the family and the child. One may wonder, "Is my child ready for school?" and, "Is the school ready for my child?" While there is no one formula for ensuring school "readiness" there are many opportunities for families and caregivers to promote and support a child's development and learning prior to entering kindergarten.

Children learn, every moment of every day, in every activity, interaction, and environment they experience. When children enter school, they bring with them a diversity of experiences and backgrounds. Children enter school "ready" with what they know and are able to do upon entrance to kindergarten.

The *Let's Get Ready! A Family's Guide to Supporting Kindergarten Readiness* is structured using the *North Carolina Foundations for Early Learning and Development* (2013). *Foundations* provides focus to the five areas of development which guide the understanding of what children know and can demonstrate within the age range from birth to five years:

- Approaches to Play and Learning
- Emotional and Social Development
- Health and Physical Development
- Language and Communication Development
- Cognitive Development

Each section includes "I Can Statements" based on the Older Preschooler indicators from *Foundations*. These help children develop self-confidence and ownership of their learning. "I Can Statements" enable children, family, and caregivers to work together to support the development and mastery of specific skills.<sup>1</sup>

The *Let's Get Ready!* guide is a tool to support the family-school partnership. It is a collection of ideas and strategies to empower families and caregivers in supporting the natural unfolding of a child's skills, abilities, and potential for lifelong learning.

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(1) Berger, Ron, et al. "Leaders of Their Own Learning: Chapter 1: Learning Targets." *Leaders of Their Own Learning: Chapter 1: Learning Targets* | EL Education, 2020, [eleducation.org/resources/chapter-1-learning-targets](https://eleducation.org/resources/chapter-1-learning-targets).

## What's in this Guide?

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### Transition Timeline

This tool outlines important steps families can take as they work through the transition process the year before kindergarten.

### Support for Each Area of Development

#### "I Can Statements" Scale

After reading each "I Can Statement" families may consider and mark how frequently they observe the child demonstrating the skill. This can help families understand which skills are strengths for the child and which skills may benefit from additional support.

#### Support Tips

A collection of interaction, communication, and response strategies for families and caregivers specific to each area of development.

#### "Try This!" Activities

Choices of child-friendly activities that families and caregivers can do at home to support the development of the skills listed in each section.

### Resources

The QR Code links found on the back cover of this guide lead to additional information, strategies, and supports.



### *Special thanks for input provided by:*

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Mischele Glover,  
Newton-Conover City Schools

Renee' Harrell,  
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Henderson County Public Schools

June Nealy,  
Rockingham County Schools

Robyn Sutton,  
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# Transition Timeline

This table outlines a general timeline for families to consider as they work through the transition to kindergarten process the year before kindergarten. Families should consult with their local school districts for more specific guidance on processes and dates.

TIMEFRAME	TRANSITION ACTIVITIES
<b>August - October</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin to explore options for schools in your community.</li> <li>• Review district and school websites to learn more about kindergarten registration dates, school choice application deadlines, and any special events for rising kindergarten families such as tours or open houses.</li> <li>• Review the “I Can Statements” and mark each item. Engage with your child using the included support tips and activities.</li> </ul>
<b>November - January</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call or go to the school website to learn more about:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• attendance policies</li> <li>• meal plans</li> <li>• transportation options</li> <li>• before and after school care</li> <li>• calendars</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Check with your school regarding the different documents that will be required for registration. Begin collecting the required documents.</li> <li>• Schedule a well-child visit and request for your healthcare provider to complete the required NC Health Assessment (available from your school or healthcare provider). Make sure vaccinations are up to date and request a copy of your child’s immunization record.</li> <li>• Complete the kindergarten registration process as it is made available in your district.</li> </ul>
<b>February - April</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visit the new school and begin talking about kindergarten with your child. Discuss how the child’s current preschool or home routine may be similar to or different from the school day routine.</li> <li>• Read books together about kindergarten. A booklist can be found in the Language Development and Communication section of this guide.</li> </ul>
<b>May - August</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make a plan for getting your child to school on time every day. Consider transportation, before and after school needs, and a back-up plan.</li> <li>• Take advantage of opportunities to visit the school, see the kindergarten classroom and meet the teacher.</li> <li>• Review and revise your markings for the “I Can Statements” in this guide.</li> <li>• Share information with your child’s kindergarten teacher such as:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• your recordings in this booklet</li> <li>• your child’s strengths and interests</li> <li>• special family customs/traditions</li> <li>• languages spoken in the home</li> <li>• allergies, medical, physical, or self-care needs</li> <li>• any special education needs</li> <li>• custody (as applicable) and contact information</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Establish regular wake-time and bed-time routines.</li> <li>• Inquire about the rest time practices at your child’s school. Begin adjusting your child’s routine naptimes to align with school expectations.</li> <li>• Plan for daytime meals and request a Free &amp; Reduced Price School Meals Application, as necessary.</li> <li>• Get ready for the first day! Check what school supplies you may need and ask your school for any community resources that can assist.</li> <li>• Familiarize yourself with any special calendar options for kindergarten students, such as staggered entry days, and know your child’s first day.</li> </ul>

# Approaches to Play and Learning

The **Approaches to Play and Learning** area addresses how children learn and includes children's attitudes toward and interest in learning. It reflects behaviors and attitudes such as curiosity, problem-solving, maintaining attention, and persistence. Children display these characteristics in the way they learn in all domains and curriculum areas, including music, dramatic play, and art.

– Adapted from *Foundations*

	Not Yet	Sometimes	Most of the Time
I can share my interest with others by showing, saying or doing.			
I can try new things to learn about my world.			
I can use my imagination to think about new ways to play.			
I can use my toys and materials in creative and inventive ways.			
I can stick with challenging tasks.			
I can find different ways to solve problems.			
I can play by myself.			
I can ignore distractions while focusing on a task.			
I can keep trying when things get hard.			

## Support Tips:

- Provide extended blocks of time for the child to play, explore materials, and work at their own pace. Allow the child to be independently involved without interruption.
- When the child begins losing interest in a problem or activity, ask questions to help them focus for just a bit longer. For example, "I see you are working so hard. Tell me about what you've done and what you plan to do next."
- Avoid criticism when your child makes a mistake. Instead, help your child see their mistake as an opportunity to do something differently next time. "Hmmm, that didn't go so well this time. What do you think we could do differently next time?"
- When you notice your child working hard, encourage them to keep working by focusing on their effort rather than results. Acknowledge their consistency and continued effort. "I noticed you have been working really hard on that! Tell me about your work."
- Encourage children to play with toys in new ways. For example, a block may become a car or telephone. A hat may become a crown or basket.



- As the child encounters a challenge, support independent problem solving. Remind the child of steps they have taken, help them think of new ideas, and ask questions that may lead them to a solution. Share ideas and thoughts about solving problems. Ask, "What have you already tried?" "How did that work?" "Can you think of some other things to try?" "What do you think about the problems and solutions we talked about together?"
- Encourage the child to try new things while accepting their tolerance for change. Recognize that some children need supports to adapt to changes such as advanced notice, pictures, or a model of how to use materials in new ways.



## *"Try This!" Activities*

### *Reusable Parts Play*

Create a collection of unused items or recyclables from around the home (paper towel tubes, shoe boxes, empty containers, lids, etc.).

Give children extended periods of time to free play and create with these "loose parts."

Allow the child to share their creations with others.

### *Better Together*

With your child, think about an activity you can do together such as an art project, puzzle, cooking, or a home project.

Work together to set goals and make a plan to complete it.

"What is our goal?"

"Where should we start?"

"What should we do next?"

Remind the child about negotiation and compromise and offer choices for ways to participate.

### *Act It Out*

Read a favorite story together.

Allow the child to find items from around the house that they can use to act out the story (clothes, props, etc.).

Encourage them to create additional events for the story or even new endings.

### *Wonder Walk*

Go on an outside walk together and collect objects for which the child is curious.

Talk about the objects together and encourage the child to wonder by asking questions such as, "How do you think that got here?" or, "What do you think it does?"

### *Old to New*

Provide the child with used magazines, mailers, or other old print materials.

Allow them to cut out pictures, words, and artwork to create a new art piece of their own.

### *Outside the Frame*

Select a picture from a magazine, photo album, online source, or book.

Talk about the picture together.

"What do you think is happening in the picture?"

"What other things do you think might be happening outside of this picture that we can't see?"

# Emotional and Social Development

The **Emotional and Social Development** area addresses the way children feel about themselves, their relationships with others, and how they learn to manage and express emotions. The development of positive emotional and social skills forms the basis for positive development in each of the other areas. Building strong relationships early in life helps children foster later relationships with teachers and peers.

– Adapted from *Foundations*

	Not Yet	Sometimes	Most of the Time
I can tell others about myself.			
I can express positive feelings about myself.			
I can develop relationships with trusted adults.			
I can engage positively with peers.			
I can solve social problems peacefully.			
I can recognize my thoughts and feelings.			
I can recognize how my thoughts and feelings influence my behavior.			
I can show care for others' feelings and ideas that are different from mine.			

## Support Tips:

- Be thoughtful of the language you use when describing the child. Focus on positive words and terms. Have conversations with the child about their strengths and encourage them to share these with others.
- Spend time developing a trusting relationship with the child. Consider their individual needs and interests while engaging in conversations and play together. Encourage their questions and conversation. Respond with positive comments and ask deeper questions to help the conversation continue.
- Use emotion words to describe your own feelings and share why you feel that way. "When I found out my cousin was visiting, it made me feel really excited!"
- Utilize and create opportunities for the child to have interactions with other children similar in age, such as, social groups, community activities, or playing at the park. If you notice the child having trouble joining in play with others, model words the child can use to join in such as, "Hi! My name is \_\_\_\_\_. Can I play too?"
- Highlighting wider perspectives in the course of daily life can help children feel more connected to others who may be different than themselves. For example, point out when the child's actions or choices impact others or help the child find things they have in common with other people.



- It can be helpful for children to learn a process or routine to help them solve social problems. Try using the following steps repeatedly when the child faces a problem. You can even make pictures to represent each step of the process to support the child with what comes next.<sup>2</sup>
  1. Ask, "What is the problem?"
  2. Brainstorm possible solutions. "What are some things we could try to solve the problem?"
  3. Consider how each solution might work. Ask and discuss these questions: "Would it be safe?", "Would it be fair?", and "How would everyone feel?"
  4. Select a solution and give it a try!
- Model expressions of kindness, gratitude, sympathy, forgiveness, and acceptance to support the child in learning how to positively interact with others.



(2) National Center on Pyramid Model Innovations. (2020). Practical Strategies for Implementing the Pyramid Model. Retrieved September 14, 2020, from <https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/index.html>

## *"Try This!" Activities*

### *All About Me Box*

Allow children to decorate an old shoebox to make as a keepsake box.

Invite them to select and include items that show positive aspects of themselves or their work.

Children may choose to include their drawings, photographs, special toys, etc.

Ask the child to share what it is about each object that makes them feel proud.

### *Family Show and Tell*

Engage in a family "show-and-tell" where each person tells about one unique aspect of their family.

This may be a family tradition, story, cultural piece, or "hand-me-down."

Children may share about something that reminds them of their family or a special member.

As you explain, use words that are easy for the child to understand.

### *A Different Point of View*

Read a book together about children from a different culture, country, background, race, or set of experiences.

Stop occasionally and discuss the experiences of the characters and compare them to the child's.

Ask questions such as, "How do you think the character feels?" "What do you think you would do if you were in that situation?" "If you were in the book, how might you help?"

### *Make a Face Game*

Start by making a face and ask the child to guess what emotion you may be feeling.

Once they guess the feeling word, ask them to think about reasons you may be feeling that way (e.g., "Maybe you're sad because you can't wear your favorite outfit").

Next, let the child make the face, you pick the feeling, and provide different reasons the child may feel that way.

This game helps the child connect emotions to the reasons they may occur.<sup>2</sup>

### *Friendship Art Collage*

Create a family/friends art project, collage, or mural.

Lay out one large piece of paper, and a few art materials that are to be shared.

Work together to create a masterpiece!

This provides an opportunity to practice taking turns and working with others.

### *Problem Solvers Suitcase*

Talk with your child about different ways to solve problems with others (e.g., take turns, use a timer, sharing, take a break, ask for help).

Find or draw a picture to represent each solution.

Keep these together in a bag or box, and the next time a social problem arises at home; children can check their "Problem Solvers Suitcase" for some solutions to try.<sup>2</sup>

# Health and Physical Development

The area of <b>Health and Physical Development</b> focuses on physical growth, motor development, sound nutritional choices, self-care, and health/safety practices. This area of development is the foundation for the future health and well-being of all children. – Adapted from <i>Foundations</i>	Not Yet	Sometimes	Most of the Time
I can try new foods and make healthy food choices.			
I can engage in active physical play.			
I have healthy sleeping habits.			
I can run, skip, hop or move quickly without bumping into others.			
I can use my hands to complete tasks such as buttoning, cutting, writing/drawing, using spray bottles, etc.			
I can ask for help when needed.			
I can take care of my basic self-hygiene.			
I can tell why good health practices are important.			
I can recognize and avoid harmful or dangerous situations to keep myself and others safe.			

## Support Tips:

- Establish a consistent bed-time and wake-time for the child. Involve the child in creating an evening routine which may include a light playtime, bath, brushing teeth, bedtime story, and then bed. It is recommended that children ages 3-5 receive between 10-13 hours of sleep per day, including naps. Limiting screen time near bedtime can also support healthy sleep patterns.<sup>3</sup>
- Building active habits early in life can translate into a healthy lifestyle. Create a daily routine that incorporates physical exercise through active games in and outside your home. Finding activities the child enjoys or is motivated to learn can keep them healthy and active. Appropriate physical activities for young children may include kicking or throwing a ball, playing tag or follow-the-leader, hopping on one foot, riding a tricycle or bike with training wheels, or running obstacle courses.
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in routine activities that exercise the small muscles of the hand such as opening and closing food containers, inserting straws into juice boxes, zipping/buttoning clothing, cutting, and using spray bottles.



- Establish strong routines that help children build independence with self-care skills during mealtimes, dressing, toileting, and cleaning up after play. Try modeling:
  - the hand washing process while singing “Happy Birthday” or another familiar song to ensure the child scrubs long enough.
  - how to properly cover sneezes and coughs using the crux of the elbow or a tissue, not the hand.
  - how to thoroughly brush their teeth twice per day.
- When incorporating a healthy practice, such as hand washing or limiting screen time, explain to the child why that practice is healthy and important.
- Model asking for help and reinforce that asking for help is okay and welcomed by others. Show the child how to express gratitude for the help they receive and acknowledge the positive outcome.
- Should you observe the child engaged in a dangerous behavior, stop and talk about safer options in the moment. Remain consistent with the house rules. Role-play possible dangerous situations, such as accepting items from a stranger, and allow the child to act out what they may and should do.



(3) American Academy of Pediatrics: [healthychildren.org](https://healthychildren.org/English/healthy-living/sleep/Pages/Healthy-Sleep-Habits-How-Many-Hours-Does-Your-Child-Need.aspx). (2018, July 02). Healthy Sleep Habits: How Many Hours Does Your Child Need? Retrieved September 14, 2020, from <https://healthychildren.org/English/healthy-living/sleep/Pages/Healthy-Sleep-Habits-How-Many-Hours-Does-Your-Child-Need.aspx>

## “Try This!” Activities

### *Taste Test*

*Include the child in meal preparations to provide opportunities to sample new foods and healthy options.*

*Invite the child to share what foods they like and dislike along with the different flavors they are experiencing such as sour, salty, sweet, or bitter.*

### *Picture This! Routines*

*Providing pictures for the steps of a routine can help children become more independent.*

*Find or help the child draw pictures of each step of morning and/or bedtime routines.*

*Glue the pictures in order on a strip of paper or cardboard.*

*The child can use a clothespin to “check-off” each step of the routine as it is completed.*

### *Hopscotch and More*

*Hopping and jumping require strong gross motor skills, balance and coordination.*

*Hopscotch is a simple way to practice these skills, in addition to learning to recognize numerals.*

*These games can also be set up indoors by using masking tape to mark areas.*

*Challenge the child to hop, skip, and jump through them.*

### *Playdough Treasure Hunt*

*Playing with playdough supports the strengthening of the hand muscles.*

*Hide coins, beads, or small toys in a ball of playdough to create a treasure hunt experience that will encourage longer play times.*

*Setting clear rules up front and using baking sheets or trays can help contain the fun.*

### *Grocery Store Fun*

*Save old food containers to set up a pretend grocery store at home.*

*Have children “shop” and discuss which items would be healthy options for meals and snacks and why.*

*Ask the child to think about other healthy options they may want to add to their grocery list.*

### *House Rules*

*With the child’s help, create a simple poster that illustrates the rules/expectations for home. Three to five rules are plenty.*

*As you create each rule, discuss why it is important and how it can help keep them safe.*

*For example, “We play in the yard; this will keep us safe from cars passing on the road.”*

# Language Development and Communication

The <b>Language Development and Communication</b> area is important for children's language and early literacy development. Adults who build nurturing relationships by paying close attention to what children are trying to communicate, and responding consistently to children's communication help children become good communicators. – Adapted from <i>Foundations</i>	Not Yet	Sometimes	Most of the Time
I can listen, take turns, and communicate with others.			
I can ask others for help when I need something or don't understand.			
I can use my language to share my experiences, thoughts, feelings, and ideas with others.			
I can learn and use new words.			
I can look at and enjoy books and print on my own.			
I can listen to, learn from, and share about books read to me.			
I can experiment with the sounds of language through rhymes, syllables, and the beginning sounds of words.			
I can identify some letters in my name and am beginning to learn the letters and sounds of the alphabet.			
I can use some letters (or letter-like forms) and sounds I know to begin to write my name and some familiar words.			

## Support Tips:

- Engaging in meaningful conversations with the child is critical to language and communication development, is supportive of building relationships, and is a foundation for early literacy. Here are some tips for great conversations:
  - Model how to use positive conversation skills such as taking turns, maintaining appropriate eye contact, and using polite words.
  - Use open-ended questions whenever possible. These are questions that are not just answered by a simple "yes/no." Try, "What was the most exciting thing you did today?" instead of, "Did you have fun today?"
  - Rephrasing what the child says in a new or different way lets them know you are listening and promotes communication development. Rephrasing can also provide an opportunity to correct grammar and introduce new vocabulary in a natural way (e.g., The child may say, "Dad fixed the pipe with the **pincher-things**." You can rephrase, "Oh, Dad fixed the pipe with the **pliers**."
- Provide different props or toys that encourage the child to talk and tell stories (e.g., toy telephones, puppets, microphones, wordless picture books, or miniature items from a story).



- A child's name is a very important word to them at this age. It is a great place to start learning the names of the letters and each letter's special shape and sound. Practice name writing as a natural part of activities rather than in isolation.
- Point out letters and print in the environment. Engage the child in songs and rhymes that focus on the letters of the alphabet.
- When you are writing, include the child in the process by explaining what you are writing and why. For example, "I'm making a grocery list so I can remember everything we need when I'm at the store. We need cookies, and I'll write that on the list: C-o-o-k-i-e-s."



## *"Try This!" Activities*

### *And Then...*

Begin by telling a story; either pretend or one from memory. Stop after you have shared a few details and say, "And then..." Next, the child takes the lead to create and tell the next part of the story. After they have shared a few details, they can say, "And then..." giving a turn back to you. Keep the story going as long as the child has interest.

### *Order Up!*

Set up a pretend restaurant at home. You can collect take-out menus, print from online, or encourage the child to make their own. Give the restaurant a name and provide paper and pencil for the "waitresses/waiters" to collect your order. Children can add pictures of food from magazines or may draw pictures of their entrées on a paper plate.

### *Reading On-The-Go*

Early on, children recognize print from the environment such as restaurant and street signs or food and toy labels. While in the car, point out different signs they may recognize. Introduce a "letter hunt" by asking, "How many signs can we find with the letter ('S')?" Begin by searching for letters found in the child's name, as these are likely to be most familiar.

### *Rhyme Time*

Think of a word that is simple for the child to develop multiple rhyming words for. Ask, "How many words can you think of that rhyme with ('cat')?" Encourage the child to beat their record with each new word. Fun or made-up words are okay. The goal is for the child to hear that the final sounds of the words are the same.

### *My Favorites*

As you read with the child daily, share some of your favorite books or stories from when you were a child. Label a box or basket for "Our Favorites." Allow the child to include their favorite books in the bin and invite other family members to do the same. Having a collection of easily accessible favorite books can encourage a love of reading.

### *That's My Name*

Offer a variety of materials for the child to build, design, or decorate their name (e.g., playdough, blocks, sidewalk chalk, a name plate for their door). Use these opportunities to highlight each letter, talk about the shape, and practice the sound it makes. It is important that the child see correct models of their name using upper- and lower-case letters.

## Going to Kindergarten Booklist



A

B



*Read together every day!*

Here are some tips to make story times meaningful and fun:

- It is okay to re-read favorite books over and over.
- Include a variety of books such as fiction and non-fiction.
- Books with predictable text or repeated lines will provide the child an opportunity to “help” you read.
- As you read, talk about the pictures and draw attention to the print on the page. You can talk about the direction you read or show where you begin reading on each page.
- Point out letters, talk about their sounds, and whether they are upper or lower case.
- Stop and talk about what is happening in the story and make predictions of what might happen next. Ask open-ended questions that help the child connect with the characters.



CAT

**All Are Welcome**  
by Alexandra Penfold  
and Suzanne Kaufmann

**Chrysanthemum** \*  
by Kevin Henkes

**Chu’s First Day of School** \*  
by Neil Gaiman and Adam Rex

**Clifford Goes to Kindergarten** \*  
by Norman Bridwell

**Franklin Goes to School** \*  
by Paulette Bourgeois

**If You Take a Mouse to School** \*  
by Laura Numeroff

**Kindergarten Kids**  
by Ellen Senisi

**The King of Kindergarten**  
by Derrick Barnes and Vanessa  
Brantley-Newton

**The Kissing Hand** \*  
by Audrey Penn

**Lola Goes to School** \*  
by Anna McQuinn

**Look Out Kindergarten,  
Here I Come!** \*  
by Nancy Carlson

**The Night Before Kindergarten**  
by Natasha Wing

**Pete the Cat: Rocking in  
My School Shoes**  
by Eric Litwin

**Peter’s Chair** \*  
by Ezra Jack Keats

**Ricardo’s Day** \*  
by George Ancona

**The School Book** \*  
by Todd Parr

**Sometimes I’m Bombaloo**  
by Rachel Vail

**Twindergarten**  
by Nikki Ehrlich and  
Zoey Abbott Wagner

**Wemberly Worried** \*  
by Kevin Henkes

\* available in Spanish

# Cognitive Development

<p>The <b>Cognitive Development</b> area focuses on children's ability to acquire, organize, and use information in increasingly complex ways. In their search for understanding and meaning, young children play an active role in their own cognitive development.</p> <p>– Adapted from <i>Foundations</i></p>	Not Yet	Sometimes	Most of the Time
<b>Thinking and Reasoning</b>			
I can use sound, touch, smell, sight and taste to learn about my world.			
I can show what I know by modeling, drawing, acting, and telling.			
I can tell the difference between things that are real and those that are make-believe.			
<b>Creative Expression</b>			
I can explore and express myself using a variety of art forms (song, dance, painting, dramatic play, etc.).			
<b>Scientific Knowledge</b>			
I can observe, tell about, and care for the natural world.			
I can explore my world by asking questions, comparing things, and using various tools.			
<b>Social Connections</b>			
I can be a member of various groups of people.			
I can show I value others by learning about their culture and language.			
I can share information about my family and community.			
<b>Mathematical Thinking</b>			
I can rote count to 20.			
I can count a group of objects (up to 10) pointing to each object as I count and tell how many in all.			
I can instantly recognize how many objects are in a small group (up to 3) without counting.			
I can tell which group has more or less in small groups of objects (up to 5).			
I can recognize and attempt to write some numerals (1-5).			
I can show I understand the words "first", "next", and "last".			
I can observe and continue a pattern.			
I can recognize and tell about a few basic shapes.			
I can use observation and counting to answer questions such as, "How many do we need?"			

## Support Tips:

- Encourage curiosity and provide time for children to explore the world around them and to share their findings.
- Host conversations with the child about what they are seeing, saying, and doing. Remember to use open-ended questions and to rephrase their words to teach new vocabulary when possible.
- Provide opportunities for the child to experience different art forms (e.g., music, dance, visual art, drama) either in person, by viewing or listening on television/radio/online, or by participating in hands-on activities.
- Allow outside time every day when possible. Encourage the child's interaction with the natural world by touching, seeing, smelling, and listening.
- Provide opportunities for the child to engage with people outside of their families and to explore books/media from cultures other than their own.
- Early mathematical concepts can be embedded as a part of daily routines. This may look like counting the number of plates/silverware needed for a mealtime, sorting coins, counting people in line at the store, or talking about the shapes of different items during play.



- Use timing words throughout the day to help your child learn about order and routine (e.g., "First, we will clean-up, then we will go outside.>").
- Children will be more motivated to write numerals for reasons that are important to them, such as keeping score in a game or making a list.

## "Try This!" Activities

### *Real and Make Believe*

Read a favorite make-believe story.

Pick one element from the story and read an article, non-fiction book, or webpage about that same element (e.g., for *The Three Little Pigs*, also read an article about real pigs).

Discuss the differences between real and make-believe. "What could make-believe pigs do that real pigs can't?"

### *Moving to the Music*

Play a variety of music and/or encourage children to make their own instruments from items found at home. Ask the child to move their body to the music.

Ask questions such as, "What does this music make you think of?" "How does this music make you feel?"

Discuss the sounds they hear and explore how to make music together.

### *Junior Journalist*

Go for a walk with the child and observe various types of wildlife or plants in your area.

Invite the child to tell about the plants and animals observed.

Children can begin a science journal/notebook to draw pictures and label the things they see on their walks.

### *I Spy-Shapes Version*

Ask the child to identify various shapes found within the home or in the natural environment.

Play "I Spy," by saying "I spy with my little eye, something that is a (shape)." The child can name objects they see that are of that shape until they guess the correct one.

Take turns selecting objects and continue play for as long as the child has interest.

### *My Collections*

Building collections is a great way to use a variety of math skills. These can come from nature or from items at home (e.g., leaves, rocks, toys, caps, noodles). Encourage the child to:

- sort the items based on how they are similar (size/shape/color).
- count the items in each group.
- determine which has more or less.
- order the items by size.
- create patterns based on shape, size, or color.

### *One Book, Many Languages*

Many books are published in multiple languages. These can be found online or at your library.

As you read, discuss the similarities and differences. Talk about how the stories are the same but are written in different languages.

Discuss the language you speak within the home and talk about other languages often heard within your community.



**"I Can Statements"**  
Detailed Descriptions



**North Carolina Foundations  
for Early Learning and  
Development, 2013**



**North Carolina Foundations  
for Early Learning and  
Development Progressions:  
Birth to Five**



**Quick Reference Guide:  
NC Standard Course of  
Study for Kindergarten**



**NC Health Assessment**

## Resources for Families



**CDC Learn the  
Signs. Act Early.  
(mobile app)**



**NC Office of  
Early Learning**



**Unite for Literacy  
(free online books  
in 50+ languages)**

## Resources Consulted in the Development of this Document

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