



Welcome to Kindergarten™  
THE LEARNING PARTNERSHIP

*Talk. Read. Sing. Play. Every day!*

2020 - 2021

# Family Activity Calendar



This year, 60,000 families from across Canada will participate in The Learning Partnership's Welcome to Kindergarten™ program – an early years initiative supporting pre-school children and their families.

The year before and when a child starts school is an exciting and sometimes stressful time for children and their parents. This Welcome to Kindergarten calendar was developed to help families get ready for the child's transition into formal schooling.

For each calendar month, family activities are suggested that are fun and will help the child develop understandings that are the foundation of reading.

We, at The Learning Partnership, hope that our Welcome to Kindergarten calendar of activities will be used by parents and caregivers to help children develop curiosity, imagination and confidence as they begin to prepare for their adventures in learning.

### DID YOU KNOW?

- You are not alone. There are people and places in your community where you can get help finding books and toys for enjoyable language learning.
  - Public library
  - School library
  - Pre-school programs, early years centres, family and other community/resource centres.
  - Neighbours and other parents
  - Websites – e.g. [www.parentscanada.com](http://www.parentscanada.com)
- When children play "Let's Pretend" they practise the skills of carrying on a conversation, getting others to do what they want, cooperating and listening to what others are saying. They also imitate different ways people talk. For example, the vocabulary and tone of the doctor, the store cashier and the teacher are all slightly different. It is amazing how accurately children can capture the mood and intention of the various speakers. Just listen in when your child is playing parent and you will hear what you sound like to your child.
- Always encourage and praise your child's attempts.
- Get your pre-school child a library card. Go regularly to the public library and explore the children's section together.

### ACTIVITIES

#### Activities with Magnetic Letters and Numbers

Talking about letters and numbers and doing activities will help your child develop number and letter awareness. Help your child to:

- Sort the letters and numbers into different groups – e.g. by colours, letters and numbers your child can or can't name.
- Count them. "How many are in each pile?" "How many altogether?"
- Find letters from your child's name. Put these letters on the refrigerator.

- Match the magnetic letters to the letters and numbers in books, magazines, newspapers.

#### Playdough

Activities with playdough will help children develop the finger control and coordination they need for writing. To make playdough you need: 2 ½ cups flour (625 ml), ½ cup salt (125 ml), 2 teaspoons (2 ml) cream of tartar or alum, 2 cups boiling water (500 ml), 2-3 tablespoons oil (30-45 ml), 2-3 drops of food colouring. This recipe will make 8 small balls of playdough.

1. Combine the ingredients together.
2. Stir well.
3. Knead the dough and it is ready to use.
4. Store it in a covered plastic container or zip-lock bag.

#### Encourage your child to:

- Take a ball of playdough and explore the feel of it by squishing, rolling, flattening.
- Make different shapes and patterns with the playdough using cookie cutters, rolling pin, forks, popsicle sticks.
- Roll and make small balls and worm shapes with the playdough.
- Use the playdough to make shapes, letters and numbers.

#### Activities with Crayons, Paper, Glue, Scissors

Art activities will help your child develop the finger control and coordination they need for writing.

- Encourage your child to draw pictures with thick crayons or markers.
- Let your child cut out pictures from old magazines and newspapers.
- Glue favourite pictures to paper.
- Celebrate your child's art and post it for everyone to see.

# READING

## A GIFT TO LAST A LIFETIME

Learning to read is one of the most important gifts we can give our children. It opens up a world of information, imagination and success. It is never too early to begin building a foundation for reading by talking to children, playing with them, telling stories and reading with them.

If English is your second language, don't be afraid to speak in your first language. The important thing is for your child to learn language. Once children are in pre-school or kindergarten, they will pick up another language rapidly when they need to use it.

As you and your child progress through the calendar, keep in mind that you can use each month's suggestions as often as you like. Feel free to repeat your favourites and bounce from month to month for fun! Once an activity has been completed, try recording it together on the calendar under the appropriate day to give your child a sense of accomplishment and to discuss what he or she has learned with others.

**There are four building blocks that build the foundation for reading and writing.**



### READING BEGINS WITH TALKING AND LISTENING

Children who become good readers are children who are good talkers. That is, they have a big vocabulary and are able to talk in sentences.



### STORIES AND BOOKS: THE BACKBONE OF EARLY READING

When children listen to stories either from books or through storytelling, they come to understand such things as the beginning, middle and end; they broaden their understanding of the different ways people act and speak; they learn to predict an outcome; they learn to follow a sequence of events and pick out important details. These are some of the main skills needed for reading.



### PLAY AND LANGUAGE

Children's play is one of the most important ways children learn language. Most parents see the value in playing language games but do not realize that make-believe play is one of the most important activities for the development of language. This is not only true of listening and speaking, but of reading and writing as well.



### READING AND WRITING ARE ALL AROUND

Reading and writing are everywhere in any child's world. Seeing adults read and write in everyday life helps children understand the importance of these skills in getting along in the world. Being unable to read and write is one of the biggest barriers to successful living.



## Family Activities

### Week 1

As you do everyday things like setting the table, encourage your child to name familiar things – e.g.

“Let’s put a fork and knife at each place.”

“Do you think we need a spoon?”

### Week 2

Play with your child and, as you play, chat about what your child is doing – e.g.

“Tell me what you are doing.”

“What does your teddy bear want for lunch?”

### Week 3

Encourage the use of words that describe colour, shape, size and feel. Use these words yourself – e.g.

“I’m going to wear my green sweater today.”

“Let’s find your big truck.”

### Week 4

Play language games. Games help your child develop vocabulary, concentration and listening skills – e.g. Sing favourite nursery rhymes and children’s songs.

Make up words that rhyme with your child’s name, a favourite object, a nonsense word.

## Family Activity Calendar



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# September





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## Reading begins with talking & listening

How can I encourage listening and speaking?  
Take every opportunity to talk with your child.

# September 2020

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				



# October

## S Family Activities

### Week 1

Cozy up with a book for just 15 minutes a day – and not just at bedtime. The best time for story time is any time!

### Week 2

Go to the library and help your child to pick books that your child will enjoy – picture books, pattern books (*The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle), pop-up books, counting books.

### Week 3

Let your child be in charge – choose the book, stop to look at pictures, stop when your child loses interest.

### Week 4

Encourage your child to examine the book, turn the pages and find the front and back.



Jillly



## Stories and books: The backbone of early reading

How can I get the most out of story time?

Don't make story time a lesson.

Home is not school and stories should be told or read first and foremost for the pleasure they bring to you and your child.

# October 2020

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
28	29	30	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	1



## Family Activities

### Week 1

Set up opportunities for your child to be messy with glue, flour, water, playdough, paint and crayons. Encourage creativity by proudly displaying their creations and asking them to tell you all about them.

### Week 2

Go outdoors and build forts with fallen leaves, snow or cardboard boxes. Look for rocks to build an Inukshuk.

### Week 3

Involve your child in helping you with household chores – e.g. folding clothes, setting the table, sorting the laundry – “Let’s put all of the white clothes in the washing machine first.”

### Week 4

Provide opportunities for your child to make personal choices about play activities. “What do you want to do this afternoon? Play outside at the park or stay here and play with your blocks or Lego?” Decision-making will encourage your child’s sense of confidence and enjoyment.

## Family Activity Calendar



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# November







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## Play and language

Everyday activities and play help prepare your child for school.

Play is the “work” of children.

Through play, your pre-schooler will explore and discover the world and their role in it.

## November 2020

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23 / 30	24	25	26	27	28	29



## R Family Activities

### Week 1

Make a Writer's Kit – Set aside a shoe box or container of a similar size. Put in paper (of different shapes, kinds, sizes), magic markers, pencils, crayons, glue stick, stickers, old flyers, safety scissors and stapler.

### Week 2

Ask your child to help you write a thank-you note, birthday card, holiday card or shopping list.

### Week 3

Make playdough together and use the playdough to make letters for names of family members and characters from favourite stories.

### Week 4

Go outside and trace letters in the snow/sand (any place the child plays). Make an alphabet chart by tracing magnetic letters on paper. Put the chart on the refrigerator or a cookie sheet and then give your child some magnetic letters to try matching to the chart.

# December





## Reading and writing are all around

Seeing adults use reading and writing each day helps children see just how important these skills really are. Having materials you need close by is a great way to nurture these skills.

# December 2020

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
30	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			



**T** Family Activities

**Week 1**

Play games matching letters of the alphabet. Read alphabet books. Make your own alphabet books using your child's suggestions of objects for each letter – e.g. M is for motorboat.

**Week 2**

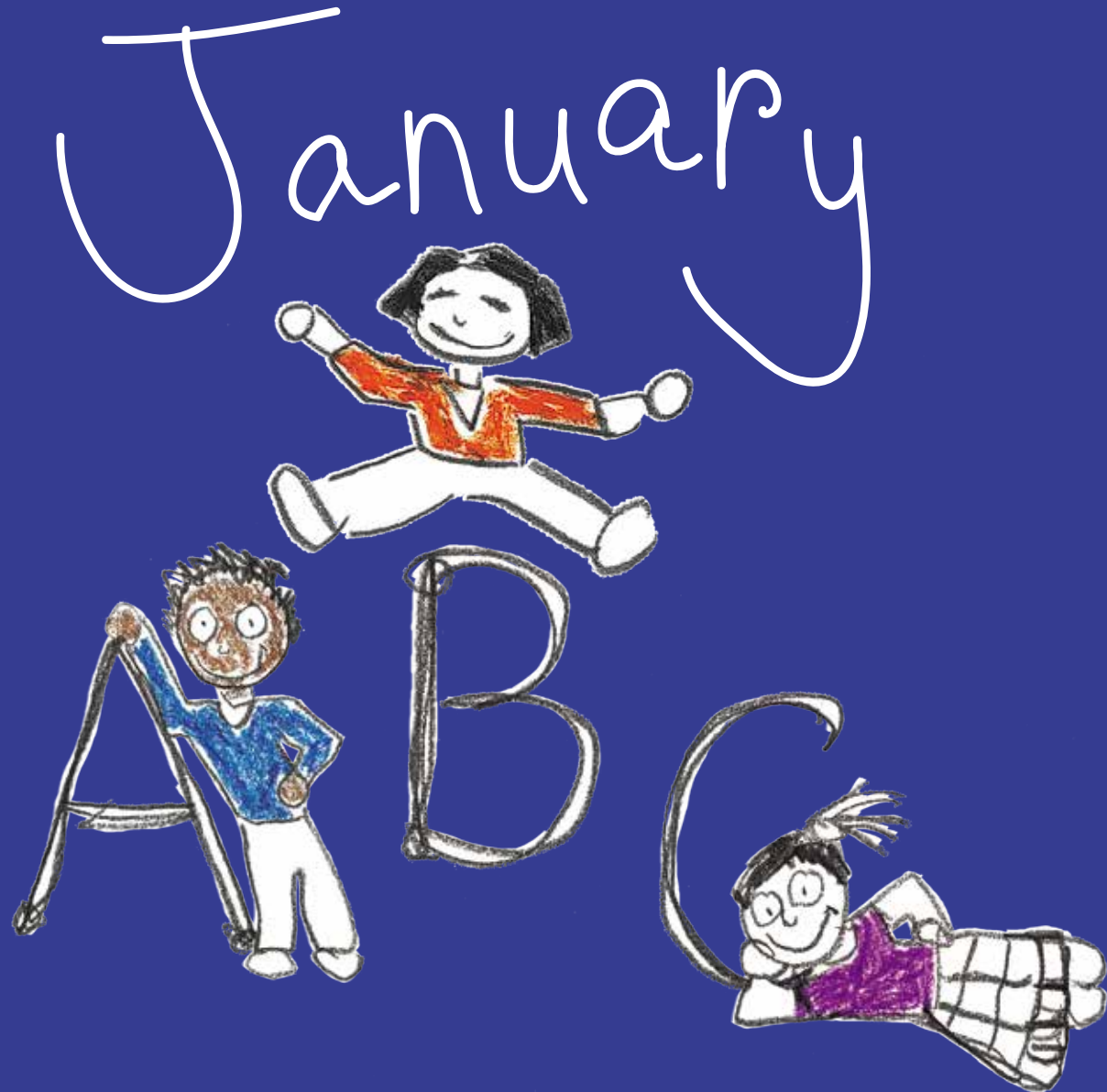
Talk with your child about the day's activities or about plans for the following day – e.g. "What should we do at the park tomorrow?"

**Week 3**

Play word and sound games – e.g. "How many words do you know that start with the same sound as your name?"

**Week 4**

Ask your child to tell you a story about a picture that they has made.



*Jan 16*



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T

## Reading begins with talking & listening

The alphabet is the key to forming words and sentences  
and helps your child make sense of reading.

# January 2021

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31



## Family Activities

### Week 1

As you read a storybook with your child, ask your child to predict:

- "What do you think will happen next?"
- "How do you think Baby Bear felt when he saw the porridge was all gone?"
- "What is your favourite part of the story?"
- "Why?"

### Week 2

Talk about other ways that the story could end. Make up new endings.

### Week 3

As you reread a favourite book together, make your child aware of the letters of the alphabet.

Point out words that begin with the same letter.

Find words that begin with the same letter as the child's name.

Find rhyming words.

### Week 4

Have your child find the magnetic letters that will make favourite words from a book. Put the letters of the word on the refrigerator.



# February



Jill



Stories and books:

## The backbone of early reading

There is a strong link between what pre-school children know about books, words, sounds and letters and their readiness for school.

## February 2021

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
1	2	3	4	5	6	7



# March

## **P** Family Activities

### Week 1

Show your child that you approve of pretend play and encourage imaginative play by joining in.

### Week 2

Have a box of props including old clothes, hats, scarves, capes, shoes and other items that encourage your child to dress up and pretend to be a character from a favourite book or TV program.

### Week 3

Use puppets to encourage conversation. After reading a story, have puppets available for you and your child to retell the story together.

### Week 4

Sing favourite songs and suggest changing the lyrics – e.g. *Ten In The Bed* – “Maybe we can use another word instead of roll-over?”



Jilly





## Play and language

What are some things I can do to encourage language and literacy development in play?

Make time to listen to your child's questions and answer them honestly.  
This will develop language skills and nurture curiosity.

# March 2021

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31	1	2	3	4



April

**R** Family Activities

**Week 1**

Read out loud as you look at road signs, store flyers, posters in windows, the TV guide, post-it notes, recipes.

**Week 2**

Include your child as you make shopping lists, write notes on a birthday card, print a reminder on a post-it, write an email to a friend.

**Week 3**

Point out messages on the television screen, logos for programs and products, announcements – e.g. warnings on the weather network.

**Week 4**

Play board games that use reading and writing – e.g. Lotto, Bingo, Memory.



*Jill*



## Reading and writing are all around

How can I make reading and writing important to my child?  
Show your child the many ways we get information. Show your child  
the reading materials that you use in your day-to-day activities  
– e.g. cookbook, television guide, newspaper, maps.

# April 2021

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
29	30	31	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	1	2



## Family Activities

### Week 1

Play the Name Game. Try this game while cooking together. Show the child a mixing bowl and ask:

“What do we call this?”

“What shape is the bowl?”

“What colour is the bowl?”

Any utensil or item in the kitchen can be used. Do the same thing while taking a walk, shopping, making the bed, having a bath.

### Week 2

Chant favourite poems and rhymes over and over together.

Alligator pie, Alligator pie,  
If I don't get some, I think I'll die.

*(Alligator Pie, by Dennis Lee, Key Porter Books)*

\*\*\*

The wheels on the bus go round and round,  
round and round, round and round.

The wheels on the bus go round and round,  
all through the town. *(Traditional song)*

### Week 3

Read pattern books that are easily remembered *(Brown Bear, Brown Bear, by Bill Martin)* and suggest that your child join in when the pattern is repeated.

### Week 4

Talk about the weather and encourage discussion – e.g. “It is raining and cool out today; what should we wear?”

“Do we need an umbrella?”

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# May





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## Reading begins with talking & listening

How can I expand my child's vocabulary?  
A child's vocabulary should almost double between the ages of  
3 and 5 to around 1500 words.

# May 2021

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
26	27	28	29	30	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24 / 31	25	26	27	28	29	30



## S Family Activities

### Week 1

Have a reading picnic, play dress-up and act out a book or read your recipe out loud as you bake cookies with your child.

### Week 2

Gather the whole family together and tell stories:

- From your family's past
- Favourite folk and fairy tales
- Made-up stories (perhaps having your child as the main character)

### Week 3

Encourage repetition. There will be favourite books your child will want to look at over and over again. Being familiar with words and letters helps children learn.

### Week 4

Plan a book exchange party. Invite your child's friends and parents over and ask them to bring one or two books they want to trade.

# June





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Stories and books:

## The backbone of early reading

Storytelling builds connections between children and their families.  
It can keep traditions and family values alive.

# June 2021

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	1	2	3	4



## Family Activities

### Week 1

Play with your child and pretend to have conversations with characters from your favourite stories – e.g. Talk to Goldilocks to find out how she felt when she met the Three Bears. Toy telephones will help you encourage make believe conversations.

### Week 2

Using blocks, Lego and model toys, build a structure together and pretend you are the construction workers planning and building a new road – “Do you think we need a bridge? What should we use to build it?”

### Week 3

Play the *I Spy game*. “I spy with my little eye something that is blue and starts with the ‘sk’ sound.”

### Week 4

Help your child to create a restaurant, grocery store, post office, etc. Talk about the furniture and objects that you will need. Talk about the jobs of the people in the settings. “Do they wear uniforms?” “What can we use?”







## Play and language

Playing language games will help your child develop vocabulary, concentration and listening skills as well as an understanding of how language works.

# July 2021

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
28	29	30	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	1



## **R** Family Activities

### **Week 1**

Collect newspapers and flyers that come in the mail. Help your child to cut out and paste the pictures and words to make little books – e.g. My Red Book My Favourite Snacks

### **Week 2**

Play games using reading, writing and matching – e.g. Go Fish, Uno, Bingo, Concentration.

### **Week 3**

Write a message, send a greeting card or make a list. Take the time to show your child what you are doing and read it together.

### **Week 4**

At the grocery store or shopping centre play the game "Can you read the sign?" Point out signs and labels and ask your child to guess what each is, using the clues around.





## Reading and writing are all around

Did you know that new ways of learning are as close as your doorstep?  
The junk mail that you receive and throw away is actually very useful.  
By keeping it handy, you and your child have reading and writing materials right at your fingertips.

# August 2021

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
<del>23</del> 30	<del>24</del> 31	25	26	27	28	29



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2020 - 2021

# Family Activity Calendar



Special thanks to  
our national program partner:

