



# PLAYING AND LEARNING TOGETHER

## ACTIVITIES FOR FAMILIES



# Playing and Learning Together!

Each kit contains the following items:



- 2 books: ***When We Are Kind*** and ***Up! How Families Around the World Carry Their Little Ones***.
- WTK Magnetic Animals and Insect Shapes, 24 pieces.
- Double Sided Magnetic Whiteboard.
- 2 cm linking Cubes, 10 colours.
- 20 red and white beads and strings.
- Fun Dough.
- Children's Scissors.
- WTK Triangular Jumbo Primary Crayons.
- Reusable Bag (made of recycled materials).

**Enjoy playing and learning together.**  
This guide offers some suggestions of activities you can do at home to help your child develop in a variety of ways.



We hope that you and your child enjoy exploring and using the resources in the Early Learning Kit. These materials offer ways to support the growth and development of your child.

Resources in this kit promote:

### Social and Emotional Development



Ideas for supporting your child in learning how to develop relationships, express and manage their feelings in various situations.

### Language Development



Suggestions to assist your child in learning new words and how to use language to express themselves, and understand others.

### Physical Development



Activities to support your child using their large and small muscles through physical activity and movement.

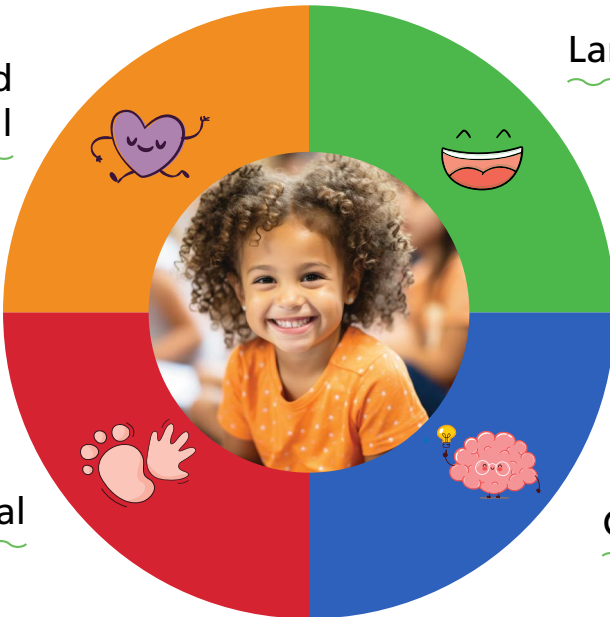
### Cognitive Development



Supporting your 3 and 4 year old to develop ideas and concepts through their senses as they explore, discover and play in their world.

Social and Emotional

Language



Physical

Cognitive



# Talking and Reading

Talking and reading everyday with your child creates a special bond that supports language learning, literacy skill development and overall knowledge about the world.



Natalie Nunn Photography - Instagram: @natalienunnphotography



Play "One Big Family"

<https://welcome-to-kindergarten.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/05-One-Big-Family.mp3>

Some literacy play ideas include:

- Making daily reading a fun, interactive and special time. Explore all kinds of books: story books, information books on your child's interests, poetry, rhyming books and of course, favourite books you like to read over and over together. Cuddle and have fun reading in different voices.
- Sign your child up for a library card and visit often. Find digital reading resources that you can enjoy together.
- Help your child notice the common words, names and signs in your home and neighbourhood (e.g., Cheerios™, McDonald's™, stop sign, street names).
- Talk, read and sing with your child in your first language.

### *When We Are Kind*

As you read this book together, you can talk about:

- What does kindness mean to you?
- What are some ways that we show kindness to our family, our friends and our neighbours?
- How does it make you feel when someone is kind to you?
- Think of ways you and your child can help and be kind to others.
- Create time throughout the week where you and your child talk about the ways you've shown kindness to others.

### *Up! How Families Around the World Carry Their Little Ones*

Read this book together and talk about some of the ideas. For example:

- Notice all the ways babies are carried. Who is carrying them? Why do babies love to be carried?
- What are the different places babies go with their families? Where would you take a baby?
- The pictures in **Up!** are collages, ripped or cut from coloured paper. Use scissors or tear shapes and create your own collages (e.g., a face, house, trees).
- Play "[One Big Family](#)" from the Welcome to Kindergarten song list. Listen for how to say "hello" in different languages.



# Fun Dough, Scissors and Crayons

As you create together, children develop their imagination, confidence, and small muscles. Encourage your child to explore using a variety of materials found at home and in the Early Learning Kit.

## Playing with Crayons

Encourage your child to draw! Spend time drawing together. Talk about the lines, shapes, and colours they are using. Allow your child to draw what they like. Drawing is the beginning of written communication that leads to writing.

## Using Scissors Together

Try using scissors to cut a variety of items. You will find many items to cut in your recycling bin (e.g., fine cardboard, styrofoam, bubble wrap, envelopes). Look at the weekly flyers or recycled magazines and have your child cut out pictures of favourite foods, toys, games, numbers and letters. Try cutting playdough!

## Fun Dough

Fun Dough is a powerful learning tool for children. It offers a wide range of learning opportunities and is fun and creative!

Use the Fun Dough and let your child's imagination run wild.

They can mould, shape, and create whatever they like (e.g., balls, snakes, snow people, imaginary creatures).

Use household items to make impressions and patterns (e.g., combs, cookie cutters, garlic press). Add beads, pinecones, and sticks to the Fun Dough. Pinching, squeezing and rolling helps strengthen the muscles in your child's fingers and hands, improving their fine motor skills. Celebrate your child's creations and display them for everyone to enjoy.

Take a picture of their creation to put on the fridge before returning the Fun Dough to its containers.

## Try making homemade playdough together.

Here is a recipe:

2 1/2 cups flour, 1/2 cup salt, 2 tsp. cream of tartar or alum, 2 cups boiling water, 3 tbsp oil, food colouring.

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





# Magnetic Animals and Insects

There are so many ways to play with these magnetic animals and insects. Try sticking the magnets to the magnetic board in fun and interesting ways.

Here are some ideas:

- **What are the names of the animals/insects?** Have your child name the magnetic animal/insect as they put them on the board (e.g., moose, horse, snail).
- **Create “groups”** like: Animals found at a farm (e.g., horse, cow, pig); Canadian Animals (e.g., black bear, fox, owl, moose); Insects (e.g., ladybug, spider); Pets (e.g., dog, cat). As your child puts animals in groups, they are developing their language and thinking skills.
- **Sorting and Classifying** - These are important mathematical skills. Have your child sort in different ways: By Colour (e.g., animals with red, brown); By Feature (e.g., animals with tails, wings, 4 legs); By Habitat (e.g., live in water, forest, houses).
- **Alphabet Sounds** - Your child may be interested in learning about letters and sounds. Play a game of “I Spy” and find animals with the same sound (e.g., I Spy a beaver and a bear, what initial sound do they make?). Use a washable marker to represent the letter sound.
- **Create your own story!** Use the animals and insects to create a simple story. This builds your child’s imagination and helps them learn about the concepts of stories. (e.g., One day, a duck was waddling down the road. He saw a big, pink pig. “Quack”, he said. “Oink”, said the pig.).
- **Creating together.** Use the magnetic animals and insects to inspire art creations. Use scissors, crayons, paint, and other art supplies to create animals and insects or to create habitats for them.





## Playing Outdoors

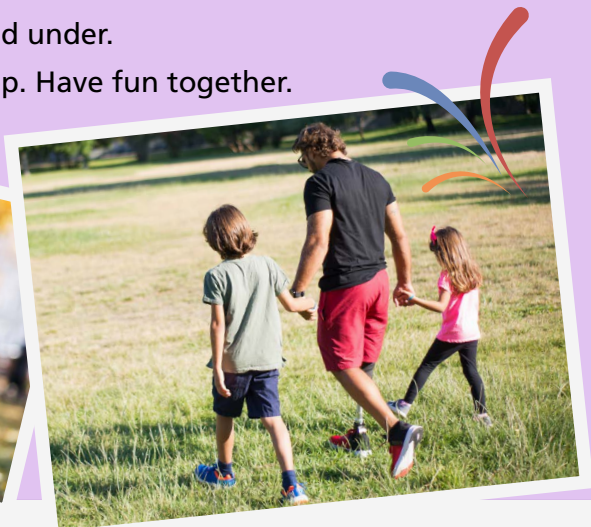


Spending time outdoors is also important for the development of your child.

Outdoor play fosters childrens' cognitive, language, physical and social and emotional development. Playing outside provides a rich and diverse space for playing and learning.

Some ways to play outdoors:

- Take a walk and notice the changing seasons and what is happening in your neighbourhood.
- Gather natural materials like rocks, twigs, leaves, pinecones (they can be fun items to play with).
- Find a shady tree to read under.
- Run, skip, jump, and hop. Have fun together.





# Playing with Beads

Playing with beads has many benefits! This fine motor activity develops hand/eye coordination (e.g., doing up buttons, tying shoes, zipping zippers and learning to draw). Counting and using beads is an important mathematical skill.

Some ways you can play with beads:

- String the beads and count how many.
- String the beads in a pattern (e.g., Red, white or red, red, white).
- Play a counting game - say a number and ask your child to put on that many.
- Replace string with pipe cleaners or leather.
- Try stringing other items (e.g., Cheerios™, pasta, washers).



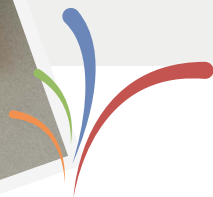


# Playing with Linking Cubes

Playing with linking cubes helps your child in many ways. It helps develop problem solving skills, as well as important mathematical and language concepts.

Some ways to play and learn with the linking cubes:

- Snap the cubes together and count them.
- Remove some cubes and count again.
- Build a tower with a given number of cubes (make a stack or line with 8 cubes).
- Roll a dice and count (e.g., dice is rolled at 6, count six cubes).
- Draw your tower using crayons.
- Use cubes to measure small objects (e.g., hand, toy car, foot, mitten).
- Use cubes to make numbers and letters (e.g., 7, 4, A, t,).
- Make a simple object with the blocks and ask your child to reproduce it.





## Key Messages for families:

### You are your child's first and best teacher!

- **Follow** your child's lead as you play and discover together.
- **Talk and read** with your child in your first language.
- **Help** your child to share and take turns.
- **Encourage** your child to make choices and decisions.
- **Celebrate** your child's learning.

The Early Learning and Welcome to Kindergarten™ resources offer high quality learning materials and family support. All activities and resources are based on current research and effective practice in early childhood development and family engagement.



Welcome to Kindergarten™  
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