#### **Parents + Schools = Success for Children**

Research shows that when parents are involved in their child's education, their kids do better in school. You can show your child that you believe education and school are important. If your child is enrolled in pre-school:

- Introduce yourself to his teachers.
- Attend all parent meetings and activities. These includes open-house, family night and parent-teacher conferences.
- Tell her about your school visit. Be positive.
  Act excited.
- Let him hear you make positive comments about his school. Never make negative comments in front of him.

- Ask how you can volunteer. Start with small projects. Bake for a bake sale. Chaperone a field trip.
- Quietly observe your child as you visit or volunteer in her classroom. See how she interacts with the teacher and other students.

As your child grows, work together with the teachers and the school. Find the activity and time that works best for you and your family.

#### Log on to Learn

The Parent Help Line — www.parenthelpline.org

Zero to Three — www.zerotothree.org

PBS Parents - Child Development — www.pbs.org/parents

How Kids Develop — www.howkidsdevelop.com/developSkills.html

Regional Office of Education — http://roe51.org Find local school information and phone numbers for schools in Sangamon County.

Springfield School District 186— http://www.springfield.k12.il.us/schools/ Click Schools. Click School Locater to find a school in your area. Call that school for information on pre-school screenings and programs.

The American Academy of Pediatrics — www.aap.org





Help is just a phone call away.

For more parenting information, call Parent Help Line at 217-544-5808 or 1-888-727-5889 from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., 7 days a week or visit www.parenthelpline.org



4-5 Years











# Soon your child will be going to Kindergarten. Make sure your child is ready.

- Read to him at least 20 minutes a day.
- Plan play time with other children. Send her to pre-school. Join a play group.
- Practice self help skills daily. Teach him to use the bathroom, zip a zipper and put on a coat.
- Schedule a yearly checkup with her doctor. Make a a dental and eye exam.

## Every child is unique. Kids develop skills at their own pace. By the time a child starts Kindergarten, he should be able to:

- Swing and climb.
- Hop on one foot. Do somersaults.
- Catch a ball.
- Use a fork and spoon to eat.
- Use the toilet without help.
- Dress and undress without help.
- Draw a person with head, body, arms and legs.
- Print some letters.
- Copy triangles and other shapes.
- Know his name (first and last), address and phone number.
- Count 10 or more objects.
- Know the name of at least 4 colors.
- Know how objects in the home are used
  food, money and appliances.
- Understand the concept of time.
- Tell stories and recall part of a story.
- Talk with others.
- Use more than 5 word sentences.
- Follow rules, most of the time.
- Be aware of sexuality.
- Enjoy playing make believe but know fantasy from reality.
- Show independence.
- Want to please and be liked by friends.

Observe your child. Does your child have any delays? Talk to your doctor. Call your local school. Ask for a free pre-school screening. Find out if your child has delays.

### Children learn as they watch what their parents do and hear what they say. Be a good role model for your child.

#### Meals

#### Healthy eating improves your child's chance for school success.

- Let your child see you eat the variety of healthy foods.
- Offer 3 healthy meals and snacks daily. Do not serve snacks too close to meal time.
- Let your child pick out a new fruit or vegetable to eat. Serve it more than once. Prepare it in different ways.
- Make meal times fun, not a struggle. Your child may eat more during "growth spurts". He may refuse foods he has eaten in the past. Continue to serve all food groups. Do not make eating an issue.
- Prevent over-feeding. Serve "kid-friendly" portions of food not adult portions.
- Log onto www.parenthelpline.org. Click on Parent Tip Sheets to find the Food Pyramid Chart and parenting tip sheets. You can also log on to www.mypyramid.gov.

#### **Playtime**

#### A child's brain, mind and body develop during playtime. Daily free play is crucial for your child's health and well-being. Playtime with your child promotes bonding.

- Provide unscheduled time for your child to play. Let her pick the activity.
- Keep toys like blocks, dolls, play phones, dishes and costumes within your child's reach. They encourage imaginative play.
- Actively play with your child. Jump rope, dance to music, play catch, kick a ball, hopscotch or ride a bike/tricycle together.
- Decrease TV and video game time.
- Schedule play-dates for your child to play with friends.
- Let your child role-play. Role-play with him.
- Provide crayons, modeling clay, scissors and paper. Watch your child create her art.
- Provide puzzles for your child to work alone and together with you.

#### **Safe and Healthy Home**

#### A child learns best when he feels safe and loved.

- Create a peaceful home. Do not argue and yell around your child. Do not allow your child to argue and yell.
- Treat family members with respect. Do not bully or call names.
- Listen when your child talks to you. Try to understand what she says or is trying to say.
- Use morning, mealtime, bedtime and hand-washing routines. Routines help your child feel secure.
- Keep medicines and harmful products away from your child.
- Keep your home lead-free. Wipe up paint chips. Dust often. Know if toys contain lead.
- Never leave the kitchen unattended while cooking. Put pans on back burners. Turn handles away from your child's reach.
- Follow auto child restraint laws. Buckle your child into a safety belt or child restraint seat.
- Teach your child to wear a bike helmet when riding a bike.
- Say I love you to your child often.

#### Reading

#### Reading is one of the best activities you can do with your child. Reading skills help your child succeed in school and beyond.

- Read to your child for 20 30 minutes daily.
- Relax as you read. Snuggle in a cozy place.
- Make reading together fun.
- Use your voice and face to reflect emotions in the story.
- As you read, ask your child questions. "What do you think will happen next?"
- Run your fingers along the words as you read.
- Point out simple words.
- Talk about the pictures.
- Encourage your child to rhyme words. If you read the word *cat*, ask him, "What rhymes with cat?"
- Read in the evening. Your child may be tired and less active.
- Read books that reflect your child's interests.
- Place books within your child's reach. Encourage her to look at these books often.
- Keep a bag of books with you wherever you go. When you have to wait read together.

