



# WELCOME TO KINDERGARTEN™

*Learning Through Play*



## WELCOME TO KINDERGARTEN™

We value you as your child's first and most important teacher.

We have created issues of *Learning Through Play* newsletters to provide you with activities that you can do at home. We strongly believe in the importance of talking, reading, creating and playing with your child every day! Have fun!

The WTK Team

[info@welcome-to-kindergarten.ca](mailto:info@welcome-to-kindergarten.ca)

**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.**

### WHAT'S INSIDE

**Helping your  
Child Grow  
and Develop**

**WTK Music**

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## HELPING YOUR CHILD GROW AND DEVELOP

As you try the activities, you will discover how play supports your child's development.

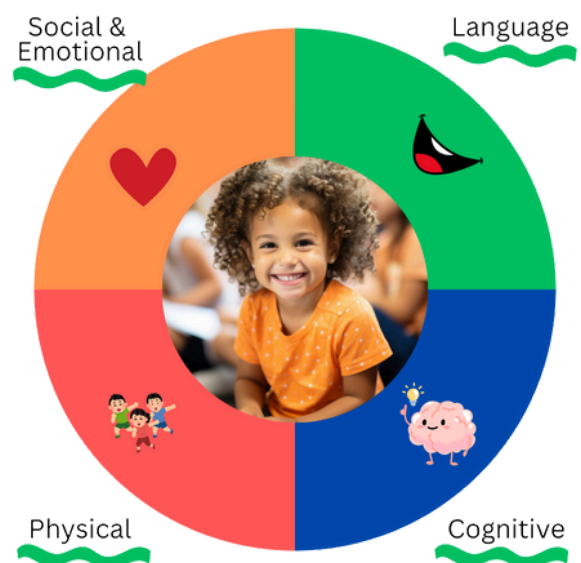
**Here are some skills your child is developing:**

**Language**- learning new words helps children express themselves and understand others.

**Cognition** - exploring new ideas and figuring things out helps children develop knowledge and problem solve; it helps children understand the world around them.

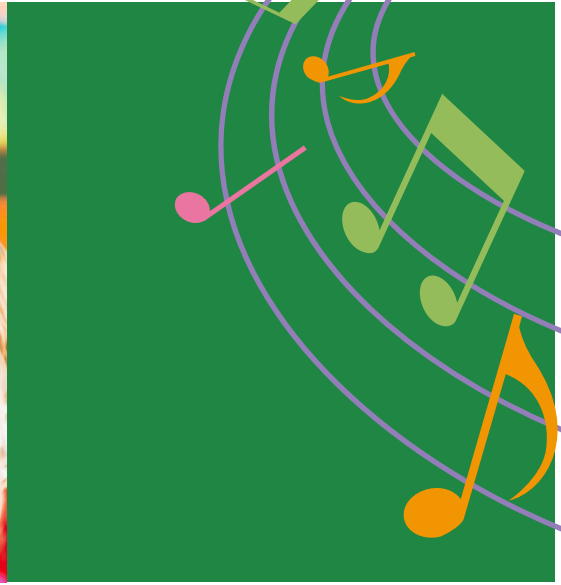
**Physical** - being physically active develops large and small muscles, while promoting movement and creative experiences.

**Social and Emotional** - learning how to express and manage feelings in various situations and relationships promotes social and emotional development.



*Students with involved parents are more likely to earn higher grades. One study found that 90% of parents surveyed believed that their involvement helped improve their child's academic performance.*

*(Source: National Education Association)*



## MUSIC & MOVEMENT

### Music & Movement

Music and Movement provide many benefits.

When you listen to music with your child, they are learning about sounds, words and patterns.

They are learning about various cultures and starting to form their personal preferences. Moving to music helps children explore and develop muscle control and coordination.

### Some ideas you can try are:

- Use music to calm or energize.
- Move to music using light objects like ribbons and scarves.
- Pretend to move like an animal (e.g., rabbit, elephant, snake, butterfly).
- Sing and enjoy a variety of music from around the world!

Research suggests that students with engaged parents have better attendance rates. Schools with high levels of parent involvement report attendance rates 2.7% higher than those with low levels of involvement.

(Source: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory)

Listen to WTK Music found here:



<https://welcome-to-kindergarten.ca/ten-fun-interactive-songs>







## READING TOGETHER

Try to find some time each day to sit and read with your child. When you talk about books and share stories, it helps them develop many literacy skills.

- Choose any book and “read the pictures”.
- Encourage your child to tell the story in their first language.
- Reread favourite stories and books again and again.
- Try reading a variety of books (non-fiction, rhyming books, traditional tales etc.).

## LOOKING FOR LETTERS, NUMBERS & SHAPES

Numbers, words, symbols and shapes can be found everywhere in the world around us (e.g., clocks, house numbers, license plates, signs, etc.). When your child notices print around them, they’re beginning to learn about literacy and mathematics.

**Here are some ideas you might like to try:**

- Go for a walk outside and talk about the signs, symbols and letters you see.
- Cut out labels and make a book of things your child can read (e.g., cereal or cracker labels, familiar toys, restaurant signs etc.).
- Match letters to names and familiar words (e.g., F like Fatima, S for stop sign, M for mailbox etc.).
- Build your child’s name with a variety of objects such as magnetic letters, twigs, stones, Lego bricks or writing tools.



## I AM GRATEFUL

Gratitude is a powerful positive emotion that means appreciating good things in life.

When we practice gratitude, we are more likely to feel happy and less stressed. This is an important skill for children to develop.

**Simple acts help children develop a sense of gratitude:**

- Write or draw a kind note to friends and family or help someone.
- At a quiet time of day ( e.g., bedtime, after reading a book together) tell them about someone or something you love or something good that happened to you that day.
- Share things that make you happy, (e.g., music, spending time with friends and family, acts of kindness, nature and its beauty).

Parental involvement is associated with improved behaviour in school. Schools with active parent participation have 40% fewer behavioural problems overall.  
(Source: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory)







## LET'S MOVE!

Physical activity is an important part of children's development. Running, jumping, climbing and skipping builds muscle strength and endurance at an early age. Children learn to persevere, gain confidence and self esteem through physical play. Physical activity also helps children expend energy and helps children become better focused on more structured tasks at home or at school. Making regular physical activity a habit at an early age will provide your child with lifelong benefits!

**Here are some simple ideas to get moving with your child:**

- Go to the playground and enjoy climbing, swinging, balancing and sliding.
- Take a family walk or bike ride to explore the neighbourhood.
- In winter, have fun skating, tobogganing, building forts or snowmen.
- Activities like swimming, soccer, dancing, gymnastics, basketball, etc., provide opportunities to learn new skills while having fun.



*Students with involved parents are more likely to graduate from high school. Schools with strong parent involvement have a graduation rate of 93%, compared to 73% for schools with low parent involvement.*

*(Source: National Center for Education Statistics)*



## LET'S COUNT!

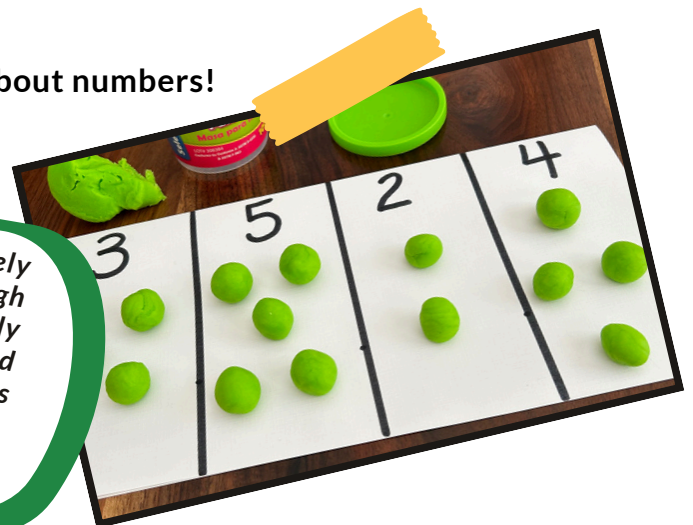
Counting activities are fun and interesting ways to help children develop number sense and basic math skills. **Here are some ideas you might like to try!**

- Count objects - buttons, seeds, beads or toys. Count and sort these in groups.
- Snack counting - count out small snacks like cereal, raisins, crackers... before eating.
- Playdough Numbers - roll playdough into small balls and count them. Place them on a number mat.
- Nature hunt - count leaves, rocks, flowers, or sticks found outside.
- Counting songs - sing songs that have numbers like [5 Little Ducks](#), [Ten in a Bed](#), and [The Ants Go Marching](#).
- Count every day objects - set the table and count the plates, cups, utensils. Count socks and sort them by size and colour.

**Think about lots of ways to count and learn about numbers!**

*Students with engaged parents are more likely to enroll in college. Approximately 80% of high school seniors whose parents were actively involved in their education planned to attend college, compared to 45% of seniors with less parental involvement.*

*(Source: National Center for Education Statistics)*







## MORE IDEAS FOR FAMILIES

We hope you enjoyed reading this newsletter.

You are receiving this newsletter because your child's school participates in the **Welcome to Kindergarten™** program.

You are your child's first and best teacher, so have fun talking, reading, creating and playing every day!

For more ideas, check out our future newsletters or our resource page at

<https://welcome-to-kindergarten.ca/resources/>



### ABOUT WTK

Welcome to Kindergarten™ (WTK) supports new Kindergarten children and families, in warmly welcoming them to school. WTK offers high quality early learning materials and family support. All WTK activities and resources are based on current research and effective practice in early learning, transition to school, family engagement and community involvement.



Bienvenue à la maternelle™  
EDUCO ENTREPÔT CANADA



Welcome to Kindergarten™  
CANADIAN EDUCATION WAREHOUSE