

FEBRUARY

Kindergarten Skills Development: Skills to Practice this Month

Encourage exploration, manipulation and dramatic play. Provide toys, games and household objects that encourage your child to explore, ask questions, and use her imagination. Allow your child to manipulate small objects to improve her fine-motor skills.

Provide opportunities to play with other children. Allow your child to interact and plan with other children in a variety of settings: the park, playground, library, etc. Talk to your child about taking turns, and cooperating with others.

Getting Ready to Read: Skills to Practice this Month

Talk to your child about the stories that you read together and ask your child to tell the stories back to you. Being able to tell or retell a story helps children understand what they read.

Health and Wellness: Skills to Practice this Month

See that your child has opportunities for rigorous physical activity, outside when possible, everyday. Your child should be able to run, jump, climb, swing, and know how to use balls.

Activities

- To encourage your child's sense of exploration, have a scavenger hunt indoors or outdoors.
- Improve fine-motor skills by encouraging your child to make simple patterns using a string and large beads, hollow pasta noodles, or buttons.
- Allow your child to practice sorting small items by placing various items of different sizes, shapes, colors, and textures into a box or bowl.
- Play board games and other games with your child. These types of games require children to wait for their turn and encourage patience and cooperation.
- Create a dramatic play area in your home with clothing items and other household items that allow children to use their imagination to pretend to be all kinds of things.
- Talk to your child about introducing him/herself to others with first meeting someone new and making new friends.

Books for Children

- *I Spy* books by Jean Marzollo
- *The 13th Clue* by Ann Jonas
- *A String of Beads* by Margarette S. Reid
- *Enrico Starts School* by Charlotte Middleton
- *The Big Blue Spot* by Peter Holwitz

Books for Parents

- *Treasure Hunts! Treasure Hunts! Treasure Hunts!* by Lenny Hort
- *Everybody Wins: 150 Non-Competitive Games for Kids* by Cynthia MacGregor
- *The Creative Curriculum for Early Childhood* by Diane Trister Dodge
- *Making Make-Believe: Fun Props, Costumes, and Creative Play Ideas* by MaryAnn F. Kohl