

## Tips for parents to help their pre-schoolers acquire key competencies

Parents have a significant role in their child's development. During the preschool years, children begin to learn the fundamentals of academic concepts, develop social competencies and learn to regulate their emotions. Parental support at this critical point in a child's life may have a positive impact on their ability to develop early key abilities and achieve academic success later in life.



Tips and strategies for parents to help their pre-schoolers acquire these key competencies are provided below:

- 1. Adopt the 'everyday reading' habit:** Reading to children is considered a key factor that supports their development. Reading appears to promote the development of language and cognitive abilities, as well as a love of learning. As a result, it is critical to establish a daily habit of reading to your pre-schooler, even if it is only for a few minutes.
- 2. Support play-based learning:** It is well known that young children learn best via play. Parents who support their children to engage in the creative and imaginative play seem to have children with higher learning achievements. Examples of game-based learning to promote creativity are puzzles, coloring books, building blocks, dancing, and imaginative play with make-believe stories among many others.
- 3. Prioritize positive relationship building:** Parents should prioritize building a strong and fostering a positive relationship with their children in order to promote their social and emotional growth. A strong bond can be built by spending quality time with the child, listening to their concern, being attentive, and being affectionate.
- 4. Provide opportunities for independent learning:** This approach aims to assist a child to enhance their self-confidence and reliance. Specifically, it encourages the child to independently investigate and learn, by giving them a safe and age-appropriate opportunity to practice their skills and knowledge.
- 5. Develop a supportive learning environment:** It is extremely beneficial to develop a home-based supportive learning environment that stimulates a child's curiosity and creativity. As a result, parents can design or find a space in their home that can be transformed into an environment where learning activities occur, like a study nook or a storytelling corner. In the space, it is advised that a variety of different age-appropriate materials will be provided such as books, puzzles, and art supplies.

6. **Frequent teacher-parent communication:** Frequent communication with a preschooler's educator is very important to stay up-to-date regarding their learning progress, achievements, needs, and gaps. This communication can happen via arranged meetings with the educators for questions or feedback on the child's learning progress, by attending other parent-teacher conferences, and by giving your own feedback on how the teacher should approach your child's teaching in order to be even more effective.
  
7. **Seek additional support:** Many tests available today can give parents an early diagnosis when a child is struggling in the educational environment. Hence, parents should keep an open mind and seek additional support from educators or other professionals when it is needed. Examples of experts who can help children with educational and difficulties are speech therapists, occupational therapists, tutors, or psychologists.

To conclude, parents should not only create a supportive environment but also proactively take action to promote key competencies acquisition and academic achievements in their pre-school age children. Supportive parents, in this case, are considered those who adopt the 'everyday reading' habit, support play-based learning, prioritize positive relationship building, provide opportunities for independent learning, develop a supportive learning environment at home, have frequent teacher-parent communication, and seek additional support when needed. Parents can benefit from these tips but they should also keep in mind that every child is different and it is important **to adapt their approaches based on their child's individual needs and competencies.**