



Getting Young children Ready to Learn

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Parents want their children to grow up to succeed in life. They want their children to feel like they can do anything they put their minds to. This "can-do" attitude comes from everyday experiences children have early in life when others notice and encourage their efforts.

Outside of the family, one of the first places children have a chance to do well is in school. For young children, doing well in school means being ready to learn. Being ready to learn is much more than knowing the alphabet and counting to ten. Readiness requires that children develop their physical abilities, language skills, self-control, social skills and desire to learn.

Be the person you want your children to become. Randy Carlson

Part of being ready for school means that young children have learned how to cooperate and get along with others. This helps children beginning school to make friends. Children who make friends tend to do better in school.

Social Skills for a Can-Do Kid

- Feels comfortable with other children.
- Shows awareness of other children and their interests.
- Understands the rights of others.
- Stands up for own rights and avoids being taken advantage of.
- Plays cooperatively and is generally positive with other kids.
- Shows consideration and empathy for others.
- Treats others fairly.
- Shows self-control with others.

Parents' Guide to Developing Social Skills

- Use **positive discipline** to teach self-control.
- Take time to **understand** children's points of view.
- Show **empathy** for their feelings.
- Help them **think** about how their behavior toward others can create or **solve problems**.
- Join children's play, do what they do, **have fun together**.
- Help them find **non-physical** alternatives to express their feelings.
- Model** correct behavior.

This preparation begins early in life when adults respond promptly and sensitively to babies' needs, helping them feel secure. Toddlerhood is the time when children begin learning to wait, to resist temptation and to meet adult standards for behavior. Adults must now set rules that are reasonable. Good discipline teaches children what good behavior is and why misbehavior is not acceptable.

Self-Control Skills for a Can-Do Kid

- Expresses strong feelings in acceptable ways.
- Waits for something instead of insisting on it immediately.
- Understands the connection between behaviors and consequences.
- Deals with anger and frustration in non-violent ways.

Parents' Guide to Developing Self-Control Skills

- State simple rules **clearly** and **calmly**.
- Help young children find ways to follow **simple rules**. (Simon-Says)
- Anticipate** young children's actions and remind them of the rules before they break them.
- Tell children what they **CAN** do rather than just what they cannot do. ("You can play with your toys. You cannot play with the remote control.")
- Notice and **encourage** children when they are behaving well.
- Redirect** unwanted behavior by offering acceptable alternatives.
- Explain** how children's misbehavior affects others.

Children develop language skills from their interactions with others. Parents' use of language and their responses to children's attempts to communicate guide language learning. By talking with infants and toddlers, adults help them connect sounds with meaning.

Language Skills for a Can-Do Kid

- Listens to, understands and talks with others.
- Understands simple instructions.
- Understands a wide variety of everyday words. Uses words to identify objects.
- Listens and pays attention to short stories, songs and rhymes.
- Responds to simple questions.
- Describes simple feelings. (Happiness, fear, anger)

Parents' Guide to Developing Language Skills

- Infants & Toddlers**
- Repeat** rhymes ~ **Sing** songs ~ **Read** simple books ~ **Describe** to them what they are doing or feeling ~ **Talk** to them about the activities of every day life ~ **Repeat** children's speech sounds and translate them into sensible, everyday words.
- Preschoolers**
- Encourage** them to talk about what they do each day ~ Ask them **questions** ~ **Read** books and talk together about the stories ~ Encourage them to use **new words** ~ Take time to **listen attentively**.