

Family Activities



School Readiness Skill: Works well alone

In kindergarten, children will spend part of the day in whole group instruction, small group instruction with the teacher and independent activities. Children are considered on task if they are able to choose an activity and stick with it until it is finished. Try the activities below to help build a sense of independence in your young learner.

One on One Time



The development of independence in children takes a lot of time, patience and practice. Take time out of your busy schedule to work one on one with your child through activities that are a normal part of your daily routine. Allow him or her to help you complete some of your household chores such as preparing meals, sorting the laundry, or cleaning the house. Offer your child plenty of praise for helping you complete these tasks. This will help build the confidence they will need as they are expected to complete tasks independently as they get older.

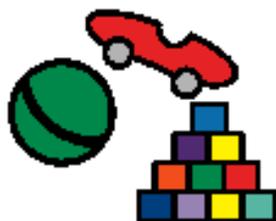
Consistency is Key

A key for your child developing independence is for you to create a schedule and routine for him or her to follow. Young children crave consistency and are more likely to thrive in an environment that is organized and expectations are clear. It is important to talk with your child about his or her plans for the day and to point out when the schedule is going to be different. For example: ***“Remember that today is Tuesday and that you always help Daddy with the laundry on this day. I want you to help me find the matches for all of the socks and put them in the laundry basket. Or “I know we usually have story time after lunch but today we have to go to the bank after lunch. We will read a story when we get home from the bank.”***



Assign Chores

One of the best ways to help develop independence is to assign your child simple household chores. Make sure that your expectations for these chores are realistic for preschool age children. You can begin with assigning your child a chore such as picking up the toys. Over time you will want to monitor your child's progress in completing this chore independently and once he or she is successful you can give him or her another simple chore to complete as a part of his or her responsibilities.



Break It Down



Help your child get organized to work independently by helping him or her break activities into smaller tasks that can be completed one at a time. This will help prevent your child from getting overwhelmed by the task at hand. For example, instead of telling your child to go clean their room you could say, ***“First I want you to pick up your toys and then I want you to put them in the toy box.”*** . . . ***“You did a great job picking up and putting away all of your toys. Next I would like for you to help me make up your bed.”***

The Power of Praise

It is important to praise your child for completing the tasks that you have assigned to him. The praise you give should be specific to his participation in the activity. Avoid giving general praise such as ***“good job”*** that is generic in nature.

Here are a couple of examples of praise that are more specific:

“Thank you for helping me fold the clothes so neatly. You are very responsible.”

“You put all of your toys away in the toy box and the books on the bookshelf. You are so helpful to me.”



Independence Books

There are many children’s books available that encourage independence. Check your local public library for many of these great titles.



All by Myself! by Aliki

Piglet and Mama by Margaret Wild

I'm Not Scared! by Jonathan Allen