



EVERY DAY!



DEAR KINDERGARTEN FAMILIES,

This is the final issue of the 2024 **Learning Through Play** newsletter. As a family with a child that has started kindergarten this year, we hope that you have found these newsletters and activity suggestions helpful in supporting your child during their transition to school.

Adjusting to kindergarten is a big step for children and families. Talk with your child about what they have learned since the beginning of school - what has made them laugh, a new friend they have made, and new skills they have developed.

Our team wishes you the best as you support your child and have fun learning and playing together!

The WTK Team

info@welcome-to-kindergarten.ca

Follow us on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#)

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.

INSIDE

Talking & Reading Together - Read! Read! Read!/Bag of Sounds	2
Exploring Math Together - Counting Song and Fingerplays/Counting On	3
Creative Exploration - Drumming	4
Exploring Feelings Together - Pretend Play!	5
Recipe - Banana Energy Balls	6



Talking and Reading Together



Read! Read! Read!

Reading to your child has numerous benefits. It introduces them to rich and varied vocabulary. Through exposure to a wide variety of books, children learn new words and develop new ideas.

- Make reading a fun, interactive and special time together.
- Let your child choose the books they are interested in having you read to them.
- Read favourite books several times, asking questions as you read.
- Encourage your child to explore a wide variety of books (e.g., alphabet books, storybooks, information books, magazines like Chirp, folktales, poetry, nursery rhymes etc.)
- The teacher-librarian at your school or local library can help your child find books in areas of interest.
- Point out and read printed items around you such as food labels, street signs and shopping lists. (e.g., Cheerios, Goldfish crackers, stop signs, etc.)

WHY IT MATTERS

Reading aloud to children is one of the best ways to help them become good readers.



Bag of Sounds

Look around the house or outside for pairs of small objects that have the same beginning sound (e.g., B is for ball and banana, C is for [toy] car and cotton ball, S is for spoon and sock ... button and bead, rock and ring, etc).

- Put one item from each pair on a tray or baking sheet. Put the other item from each pair in a paper bag (or another bag you can't see through).
- Have your child pull objects from the bag and match objects on the tray (e.g., P for pumpkin and pinecone, C for car and crayons...).
- Find the WTK magnetic letter that goes with each sound.



Exploring Math Together



Counting Songs and Fingerplays

Children learn about counting and numbers by singing songs and reciting poems with actions (fingerplays). Songs and poems play a crucial role in helping build foundational math skills.

Have fun trying some of these with your child!

Here is a Beehive

This is a beehive (hands cupped).

Where are the bees?

Hidden away where nobody sees...

One, two, three, four, five (extend fingers one by one).

Five bees! Bzzzzz!



One, Two Buckle My Shoe

1, 2, buckle my shoe. (pretend to buckle shoe)

3, 4, shut the door. (pretend to shut the door.)

Continue these actions for each phase).

5, 6, pick up sticks.

7, 8, lay them straight.

9, 10, let's start again.

5 Little Squirrels Up in a Tree

5 little squirrels sat up in a tree. (Hold up five fingers)

The first squirrel said, "Well, what do I see?" (Point to thumb)

The second squirrel said, "I see a dog!" (Point to the next finger and so on..)

The third squirrel said, "I see a frog!"

The fourth squirrel said, "Let's run into the shade!"

The fifth squirrel said, "I'm not afraid!"

Then RUFF went the dog, and away the squirrels ran,

1, 2, 3, 4, 5!

1 Potato 2 Potato

1 potato, 2 potato, 3 potato, 4.

5 potato, 6 potato, 7 potato, more.

Each player clenches their fist (like a potato).

While the rhyme is being said, one person clenches their fist while counting out the other potatoes (fists).

The person that lands on "more" puts one of their clenched fists behind their back, and the poem is repeated until there are no "potatoes" left.



WHY IT MATTERS

As we count and explore numbers with children, they begin to understand how the number system works and how numbers relate to each other.

In Kindergarten classrooms, children often sing about numbers. Ask your child to sing some songs they have been learning at school. There are many fun songs that can be found on various websites. Here is a popular counting [song about ducks!](#)





Counting On

Counting on is an important math concept for children.

- When going up or down stairs, count the first four steps, stop, and then count on with five, six, etc., rather than starting back at one.
- Encourage your child to predict how many steps it is from their bedroom to the kitchen, or how many scoops of cereal it will take to fill their bowl. Then compare the actual number of steps or scoops.
- Place the magnetic numbers in a container.
- Take turns pulling a number out of the container. After naming the number, count on to 10.



Creative Exploration



Drumming

- Use materials that you have at home to create a variety of drum sounds (e.g., coffee cans, plastic ice cream tubs, metal or plastic bowls...). Try drumming with your hands or use chopsticks, wooden spoons, sticks etc. to act as drumsticks.
- Explore the sounds, volume and various ways to drum.
- Introduce a rhythm and have your child repeat this.
- Bang out words with various syllables (e.g., cat, el- e-phant, hipp-o-pot-a-mus)
- Try drumming to a favourite song.

WHY IT MATTERS

Music and movement is a fun way to encourage children to use their creativity and imagination.



Other games to try:

- *Tissues Tango* - Place a tissue on your head and dance to your favourite music. Move any way to the music, trying to keep the tissue on your head! Try putting the tissue on other body parts and seeing if you can dance and keep it there.
- *Body Part Wiggles* - Turn on some dance music and have one person call out a body part. Everyone dances using just that body part. For example, you can call out “fingers” and everyone dances with their fingers. After a while, the next person calls out another body part, like “mouth”! Everyone dances with just their mouth (e.g., wagging tongues, puckering lips, squeezing cheeks). Wild arms, marching legs, waving hands and more can be so much fun!



Exploring Feelings Together

Pretend Play

Whether your child likes playing with dolls, toy animals, trucks, dress-up clothes or characters from movies, pretend play opens up their creativity and imagination. Despite the allure of screens in our busy lives, we can encourage children to create imaginative worlds, act out going on the bus, or play school. It doesn't take expensive stuff to use your imagination.

Are you wondering how to encourage pretend play? Here are 3 ideas;

- *Dress-up clothes and props as inspiration*
Create a dress up box with clothes and props that can be used for pretending, (e.g., apron, old hats, short dresses, old business shirts, gloves, scarves, wallet, mirror, hair brush or comb, rubber gloves, an old cell phone, old keys on a key ring, a magnifying glass, old costumes and jewelry, play money).
- *Encourage your child to create imaginative worlds.*
Follow their lead. Immerse yourself in whatever scenario your child is creating, let them take the lead. They are the chef and you are eating in their restaurant. A hairbrush turns into a microphone and toilet paper rolls become binoculars. Coming up with different pretend play scenarios and negotiating the rules with others develops the language and skills of social problem solving.
- *Use real life situations*
Using real life scenarios for pretend play helps children develop confidence to face new situations. Some real life examples include playing school, going to the dentist, visiting the doctor, solving a problem, having a picnic and more!



WHY IT MATTERS

When children engage in pretend play, they develop language, life skills, and social skills. Pretend play is one of the most important types of play for developing creativity.



Cooking Together

Banana Energy Balls

This simple easy to make recipe is a perfect energy boost.

Use a table knife to cut the banana into large chunks before mashing the banana with a fork. Together, measure and mix the ingredients.

You can also add extra ingredients such as 1 Tbsp. flaxseed, 1 Tbsp. chia seed, some yogurt - to give even more energy!

Yield: 12 energy balls

Preparation time: 5 min

Freezing Time: 1 hour



Ingredients

- 1 ripe medium banana
- 1 cup dry oats
- 1/2 cup dried cranberries, minced



Equipment

- Medium-sized bowl
- Spoon
- Fork



Instructions

1. In a medium bowl, add the peeled banana and mash thoroughly with a fork.
2. Add dry oats and cranberries and stir to combine.
3. Refrigerate until the mixture holds together when pressed into a ball (approx. 1 hour).
4. Use a spoon to scoop a tablespoon of mixture into your hands and roll into a ball.
5. Repeat this with the remaining mixture, and place balls in a freezer safe container.
6. Keep in freezer until needed. To serve, let sit for 15 minutes.



Try preparing some new recipes :

<https://welcome-to-kindergarten.ca/family-cookbook>



MORE RESOURCES TO EXPLORE

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, Follow Us on



[Instagram](#)



[Facebook](#)



Welcome to Kindergarten™
CANADIAN EDUCATION WAREHOUSE

About Welcome to Kindergarten™

Welcome to Kindergarten™ is a registered Canadian trademark of Canadian Education Warehouse.

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.

Copyright © Canadian Education Warehouse 2024. All rights reserved.
Welcome to Kindergarten™ is a trademark of Canadian Education Warehouse
www.welcome-to-kindergarten.ca

