

# Portland ConnectED

Portland ConnectED is a community-wide initiative working to build and sustain a citywide culture dedicated to supporting highly effective education for Portland's youth, families, and the community.

## Starting Strong

.....Birth to 3rd Grade Subcommittee of Portland ConnectED

Starting Strong is Portland's Campaign for Grade Level Reading under the umbrella of Portland ConnectED. We aim to achieve grade level reading by (1) improving school readiness, (2) improving attendance, and (3) reducing summer learning loss. Portland is Starting Strong with Ready Children, Families, Schools, and Community.



United Way  
of Greater Portland



Brochure Adapted from United Way of the Quad Cities Area

# 10 THINGS YOUR CHILD NEEDS TO KNOW BEFORE KINDERGARTEN



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of Greater Portland

## DOES YOUR CHILD HAVE PATIENCE?

### HERE ARE SOME WAYS TO HELP:

- Play freeze tag.
- Give a small treat to the child who can sit still the longest.
- Teach your child how to walk up to pets.



## DOES YOUR CHILD SHARE WITH OTHERS?

### HERE ARE SOME WAYS TO HELP:

- Play board or card games.
- Get two different ice cream cones and then ask to trade a bite for a bite.
- Color in a picture together using only two or three crayons.



## KINDERGARTEN SKILLS INVENTORY

### READY TO LEARN

Attendance is a habit that starts early! Good attendance in the early years, even PreK, can help your child build fundamental math and reading skills and develop a habit of good attendance that can lead him or her to success in college and future careers.

A child missing 10% of school, just 18 days a year, can decrease his or her chances of academic success.

64% of children who attended kindergarten and 1st grade regularly can read at grade level by the 3rd grade compared to only 17% of children who missed 18 days or more of school in both kindergarten and 1st grade.

September is Attendance Awareness Month! Learn more about the ways we can increase school attendance at awareness [www.attendanceworks.org](http://www.attendanceworks.org).

### KINDERGARTEN ISN'T FINGER-PAINTING ANYMORE

Kindergarten has changed from when you were little. The things that they taught in first grade thirty years ago (the alphabet, simple math, how to tell time) are now taught in kindergarten.

That means that all the things that you learned how to do in kindergarten when you were little, your children have to know how to do before they ever get to kindergarten.

**IT'S NEVER TOO EARLY TO GET YOUR CHILD READY FOR KINDERGARTEN.**

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### USEFUL INFORMATION AND CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

- National Association for the Education of Young Children: [families.naeyc.org](http://families.naeyc.org)
- Pbskids.org
- Portland Public Library: [www.portlandlibrary.com](http://www.portlandlibrary.com) p: 871-1700
- Raising Readers: [www.raisingreaders.org](http://www.raisingreaders.org)
- Readyfreddy.org
- Starfall.com
- Zero To Three: [zerotothree.org](http://zerotothree.org)

### FAMILY SUPPORTS

- Maine Families: [mainefamilies.org](http://mainefamilies.org) / p: 553-5801
- Maine Resilience Building Network: [maineaces.org](http://maineaces.org)
- The Opportunity Alliance: [www.opportunityalliance.org](http://www.opportunityalliance.org) p: 523-5049

### COMMUNITY INFORMATION

- 2-1-1 Maine: [www.211maine.org/](http://www.211maine.org/) p: 2-1-1
- Child Care Choices: [www.childcarechoices.me](http://www.childcarechoices.me)
- Portland Public Schools: [www.portlandschools.org](http://www.portlandschools.org) p:874-8100
- United Way Greater Portland : [www.unitedwaygp.org](http://www.unitedwaygp.org) p: 874-1000

For more information on Starting Strong initiatives, visit [www.unitedwaygp.org/startingstrong](http://www.unitedwaygp.org/startingstrong).

## DOES YOUR CHILD EXPLORE THE WORLD AND ASK QUESTIONS?

### HERE ARE SOME WAYS TO HELP:

- Ask questions yourself. “What color and shape is that sign?” “Why do cars have wheels?”
- Halfway through a book, ask your child what he or she thinks is going to happen next.
- When your child asks a question you don’t know the answer to, look up the answer together.



## CAN YOUR CHILD TALK ABOUT THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS?

### HERE ARE SOME WAYS TO HELP:

- When your child is upset, sit in a chair snuggling with him or her. Ask how he or she feels and listen to the answer.
- When watching TV together, ask questions like, “Why do you think the little girl is crying?”
- At bedtime, have your child list three things that happened that day that made him or her happy.



## DOES YOUR CHILD LIKE TO LISTEN TO STORIES?

### HERE ARE SOME WAYS TO HELP:

- Read to your child. Every day, starting from birth.
- Take your child to reading time at the library.



## CAN YOUR CHILD GET DRESSED, PUT ON A COAT, AND USE THE BATHROOM WITHOUT HELP?

### HERE ARE SOME WAYS TO HELP:

- Play dress-up together.
- Pull a zipper off an old pair of pants and have your child practice with it.
- Let your child get dressed and undressed by him or herself - as much as he or she can do without help.

## DOES YOUR CHILD DO WELL IN NEW SITUATIONS?

THERE ARE ALL SORTS OF PLACES IN PORTLAND YOU CAN GO FOR FREE:

- Visit your local pet shop.
- Feed the ducks at Evergreen Cemetery.
- Explore Jewell Falls.
- Try a different Portland playground each week.
- Go to farmers' markets.
- Window-shopping in the Old Port.



## DOES YOUR CHILD HOLD A PENCIL AND USE SCISSORS?

HERE ARE SOME WAYS TO HELP:

- Get a pair of child safety scissors.
- If your child has trouble cutting paper at first, give him or her clay or Play Dough to cut.
- Color a picture together.
- Play Tic Tac Toe.



## DOES YOUR CHILD SOLVE PROBLEMS?

HERE ARE SOME WAYS TO HELP:

- Play "I Spy" or "Hot and Cold."
- Give your child an empty cereal box and ask him or her to make it flat.
- Twist two pipe cleaners together in a knot and work with your child to untangle them.



## DOES YOUR CHILD PLAY IN GROUPS?

HERE ARE SOME WAYS TO HELP:

- Have a three-legged race.
- Get two children to hold a towel between them and then get them to bounce a ball in the middle.
- Play pretend with your child. "Today I am a lion. What are you?"