



A little guide on:

Preparing Your Little One For School.



Our children don't come into our lives with a manual!

We meet their needs, make sure they are happy and healthy, but how do we enhance their development by doing activities in day-to-day life to prepare them for the big transition into school?

This little booklet is full of ideas you can do with your little one before and during their first steps into education.

Communication is key!

Sing songs with your little one, this is a fun way to expand their vocabulary; songs such as:

- 1,2,3,4,5 once I caught a fish alive...
- Hickory dickory dock...
- If you're happy and you know it... (do the actions too)
- 5 little ducks/ 5 current buns...

Etc.



Talking through and explain what's happening throughout the day, for instance what you're doing whilst you support them to get dressed.

“First we put your underpants on, then your socks, then we put on your trousers, then your t-shirt” etc.

These little conversations daily can help promote both independence, understanding and vocabulary.

Communication is key!

A trip to the local park is always fun, there is so much to talk about! Here are some examples of what kind of things you can talk about.

Its cold outside, what should we wear?

Can you put your own gloves on?

What can we see?

What colour is the grass?

What's your favourite thing to do at the park?

Can we count how many swings there are?
Lets count how many people are in the park!

Ooo what sounds can we hear?

Can you hear the wind?

Although these types of questions are simple, they engage children in the world around them and widen their vocabulary. Possibly enticing them to ask more questions.

Communication is key!

Why?
Why?
Why?
Why?
Why?



Do you feel like your little one is asking “why?” a million times a day?

Believe it or not, this is a really good developmental phase. Asking “why?” shows they are curious and want an understanding of the world.

Having more understanding can enhance confidence and security, so these “why” questions are really important.

This phase is very common in toddlers.

Repeat new words on different occasions. This gives your child the opportunity to hear new words more often and understand them better.

“A young child typically needs to hear a new word **four to twelve times** before it is added to their vocabulary, and children’s understanding of words precedes their use of words.”



Gently correcting your child’s mispronunciation is a great way to avoid knocking their confidence. You can do this by repeating the correct pronunciation back to them. Example;

If they point and say, “Look a **tat**”. Gently correct them by enthusiastically responding, “Yes it’s a **cat**. Well done!”.

Tips

Use pictures or items when talking to your child when you can.

If you're talking about a bus, show a picture of a bus, or a toy bus if you have one.

Gestures and facial expressions.

For example.

Wave when you say wave.

Pretend to sleep when you say sleep. (hands under your head).

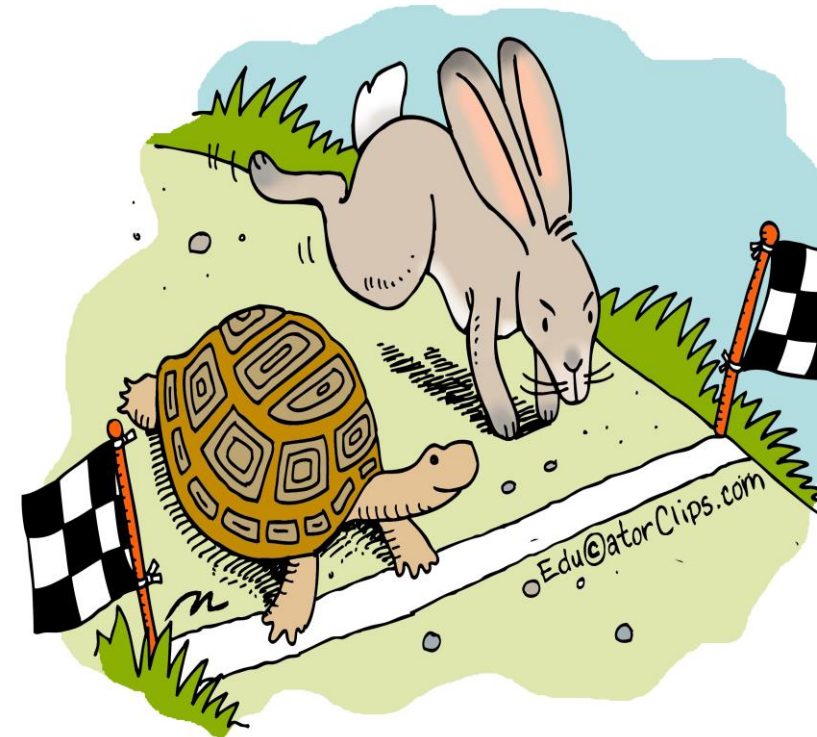
Doing this will help your child understand the meaning of words as well as the word itself.

Build on words your child knows .
"Yes a car; a blue car"

All children learn at a different pace. Try not to compare your little one to others.

They will talk when they are ready. Before you know it they will be talking as a way to explore the world.

Tips

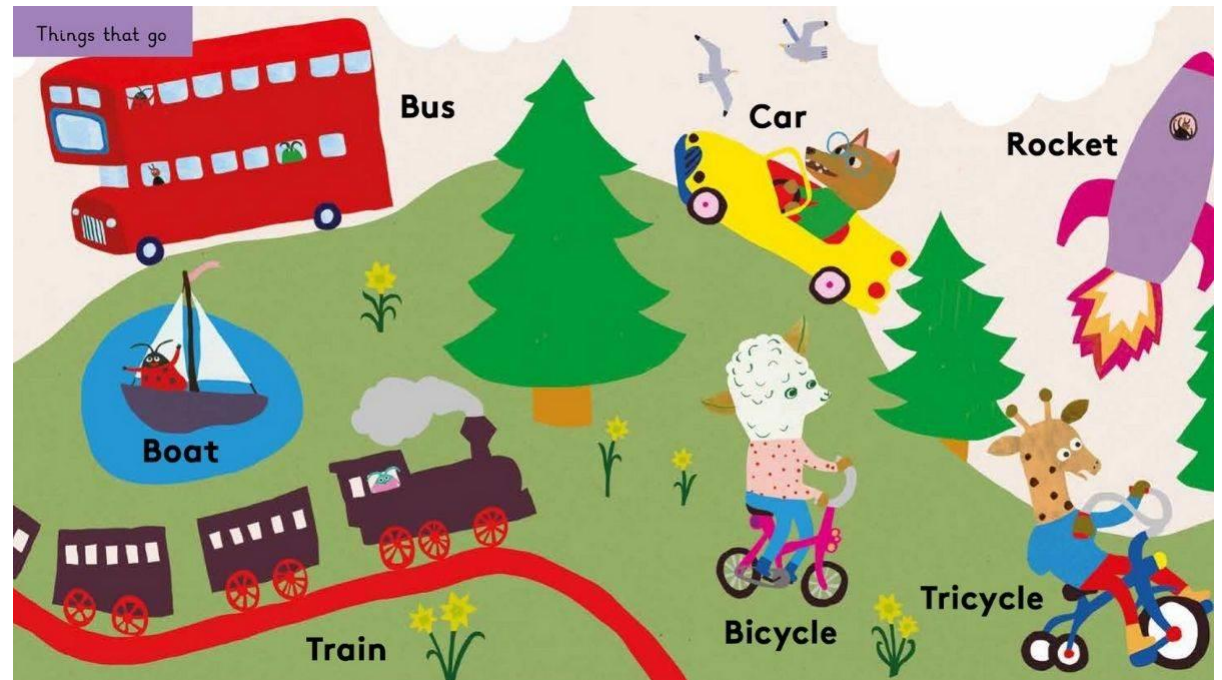


Communication is key!

Use your child's interests to their advantage.

For example if your child has a great interest in cars, you can focus on this topic to catch their attention.

You can model new words to your child during play, "lets 'push' the car 'fast'" and "lets 'push' the car slow". Repetition can help instil new words into your child.



Another example of this could be using a doll to model words like, head, eyes, ears etc.

What's happening at two?

You'll see some real changes in me now that I am two. I'm really going to start expressing my emotions. At this point I maybe can't quite tell you what I need, or what's bothering me. I might show you by "throwing a temper tantrum". This is a very normal part of toddler development.



At two, children show a wide range of emotions from happiness to sadness, to anger etc. Frequent mood changes in your little one can indicate they are trying to take control of their feelings, impulses and actions. They just can't quite put the words together to tell you.



This developmental stage, commonly known as the 'terrible twos' can start before your little one is 2, or even a little after.



See next page on how to help your little one label their emotions.

Helping your little one label their emotions.

Giving your child the words to label their emotions can help them recognise how they are feeling and why they are feeling that way. So instead of showing you by presenting in a certain way they can start telling you.

You can do this by thinking about why your little one is presenting a certain way and then telling them how they feel. For example;
“You are angry, because I wouldn’t give you another biscuit.”

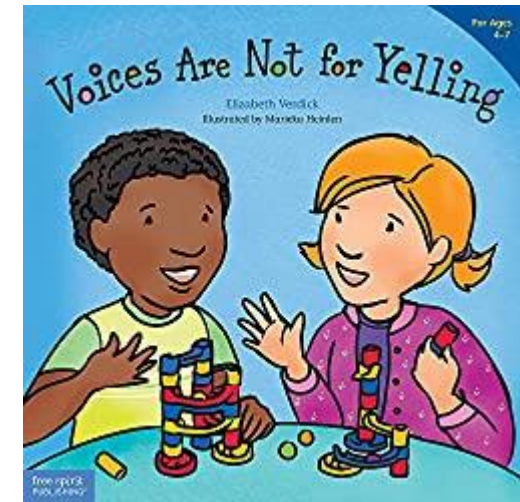
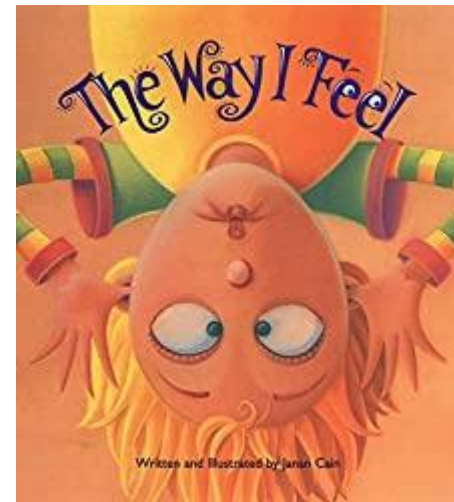
Use others as an example, observation is a great way to learn.
“You see that little girl. She is crying. She must be sad. I wonder why she is sad.”

This can promote empathy towards others.

Make a game of it

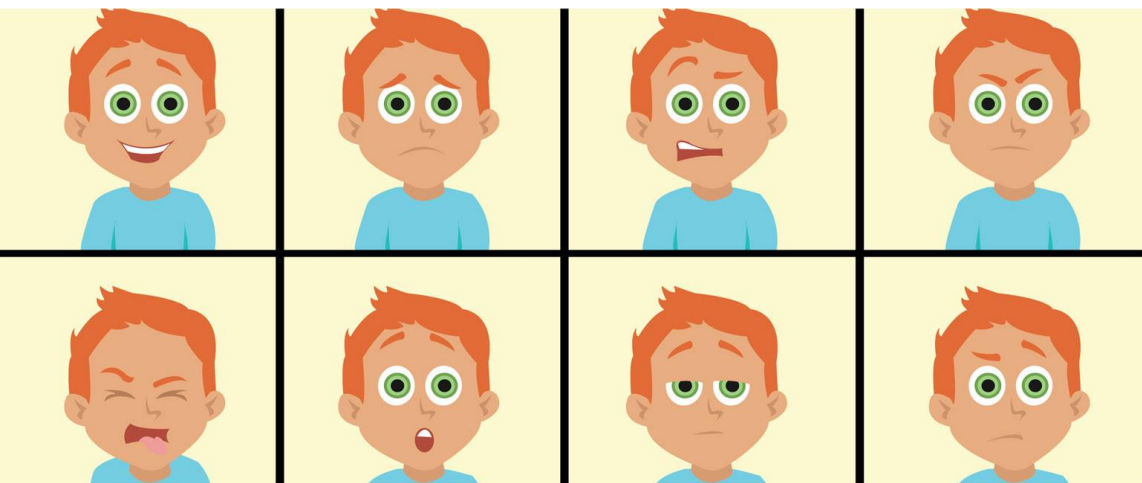
You can play a, “Guess my Feeling” game with your toddler. You can both take turns making facial expressions and you each have to guess what feeling is being shown.

Read books on feelings



[Both books are on youtube \(read aloud\)](#)

Remind your child that it is okay to feel the way they feel, help them recognise their feelings and why they are feeling that way. They will soon be able to recognise how they feel without help, even correcting you if you get the feeling wrong.
"I am not sad, I am mad."



FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS



Happy



Sad



Hungry



Thirsty



Tired



Sleepy



Hot



Cold



Surprised



Shy



Sick



Proud



Excited



Confused



Bored



Angry

What's happening at two?



Some of the simplest tasks can turn into a 'tantrum'. For instance putting a coat on.

Explain why eg 'We have to put on our coat to go outside because its cold. Look, I have my coat on, we can't go outside without our coat on.'

"Can you put your own gloves on without my help? Give it a try."

"Well done for helping put your coat on."

"That shoe goes on that foot, and that shoe goes on that one, you try and put them on."

"Good job! You put your shoes on!"

"Let me show you how to zip your coat up and then you can have a try."

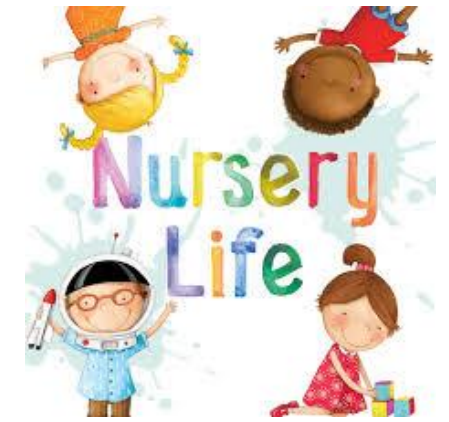
Young children get a great feeling from being independent. Allow them to try and do tasks on their own - offer little help where needed. **Always praise**, this can boost their self-esteem and encourage them to do more on their own confidently.

Tips

Preparing for nursery life

There are things you can practice with your little one so they are better socially prepared for their first steps into school.

Tidy up time!
Encourage your child to tidy up after themselves after playing. Simple tidying like putting their toys back where they go. This is great practice for starting nursery. After a little practice, they will start to do it automatically, or with little reminder.



Turn taking
During play, practice taking turns with the toys they are playing with. "Please can I have a turn?"
"Here you have a turn of this toy."



Make it fun!
Play music at tidy up time.



Simple tasks
Give simple two/three part instructions to your little one.
"Can you please pick that (object) up and bring it here for me?"
"Can you go in that box and find me the blue ball please?"

Preparing for nursery life

The transition to nursery can be very daunting for a little one. Lots of new faces; lots of new experiences. To make the change as relaxing as possible, here are a few ideas to prepare.



Get to know

Don't be afraid to ask questions. No question is silly and our Early Years staff will be happy to help answer all queries



Play dates

If you can, arrange play dates, or go to toddler sessions. This gives your little one chance to socialise with other children their age.



Talk about nursery

Have conversations about nursery, what they will be doing, when they will be going. GET EXCITED, if your little one thinks you're super excited for nursery they can join in the fun.



Visit the nursery

You will be offered a visit to the nursery. It is beneficial to take it as then your little one can see with their own eyes where they are going and meet the teachers. Make the trip to the nursery, walk past and point it out.

Preparing for nursery life

Things you can practice with your child;

- Recognising their name and some or all of the sounds (letters) in it.
- Holding scissors properly and safely.
- Drawing/painting and telling you about what they have drawn.
- Listening – sit and read books with your child, point things out and ask them if they can name them, different colours, what noises different things make.
- Name different shapes
- Counting to 10 (counting their fingers)
- Using please and thank you
- Dancing
- Running
- Jumping
- Skipping
- Throwing/kicking a ball





i hope this booklet provides a little bit of guidance on how to prepare your little one for their first steps into education.

Thank you.