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You are your child's first teacher. The gift of learning that you share with your child pre-pares him for school and for a fulfilling adulthood. When your child learns the skills to read and write well, he is more likely to graduate from high school, go on to college and get a good job. And this love of learning is likely to continue throughout life.

Ron says, "I have a learning disability and my adult ed class has really helped me. Now I feel a lot more confident that I can help my kids." For more information, call your local school district or call:  **NATIONAL CENTER FOR LEARNING DISABILITIES.** Visit: www.ld.org.

If we improve our own skills we can be better teachers for our children. Family literacy programs help parents as well as children learn. They offer classes in reading, writing and math, and often teach English also. When we learn these skills, our children are more likely to stay in school and do well. And we are more likely to do well, too!



Safe and Easy Fingerprint
Flavored gelatin
Water
Fingers or paint brushes and paper

Make a thick mixture and it's ready to use! Children can have fun and you don't need to worry if some of it gets eaten.

Encourage Creativity

- Make a place for your child to play with crayons, markers, paints and paper where neither of you has to worry about making a mess.
- Tape newspaper or drawing paper to the kitchen floor.
- Provide big crayons and washable markers that are easy for small children to hold.
- Buy or make a simple easel for your preschooler.

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Read to Your Child

Babies and toddlers love the sounds of language and the sound of your voice. They like cloth, vinyl and board books with familiar objects and simple stories. They will happily wave their arms and bat the pages. As they get older, they often join in and help tell the story and turn the pages.



Human Issues Collaborative

Sandra says, "I didn't graduate from high school. I went to classes at the Family Resource Center and now I am getting my GED and helping Davey learn to read."

Family Resource Centers

These centers offer literacy and GED classes, tutoring for children and other services. To find a center, call your local school district.

Things You Can Do

Family Literacy Resources

- Ask your school district about Family Resource Centers and English as a Second Language (ESL) classes.
- Ask your school district about Early Head Start and Head Start for families with children to age 5. Some districts also have Even Start family literacy programs for parents and young children. See page 30.
- Ask your local Cooperative Extension about family programs.
- For information on Kentucky literacy programs, call: ☎ **KY ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY** or visit: <http://adulted.state.ky.us>.
- For more information, call: % **FAMILY LITERACY HOTLINE** or ☎ **NATIONAL LITERACY HOTLINE**. Visit: www.familit.org or www.nifl.gov.

Learn About Letters and Numbers

- Look for letters in signs and go through the alphabet.
- Let children play with magnetic letters and numbers on the refrigerator.
- Provide alphabet blocks and other toys that teach letters and numbers.
- Sing alphabet songs and counting songs together.
- Make big letters in the sand or model them with clay.

Reading Tips

- Ask the librarian to help you and your child choose books.
- Read your child's favorite books again and again.
- Act out the story—create voices for the different characters.
- Sing or chant nursery rhymes and other poems. Children love rhythm, rhyme and repetition.
- Find books to match your child's interests.
- Use books to help discuss difficult topics.

Earn Your GED at Home

If you did not graduate from high school you can get a GED or diploma by watching classes on TV and studying at home. Call: ☎ **GED CONNECTION** or visit: www.ket.org.

Where To Find Help

Free Statewide Phone Numbers

☎ FAMILY LITERACY HOTLINE	1-877-326-5481
☎ GED CONNECTION	1-800-538-4433
☎ KY ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY (VOICE/TTY)	1-800-928-7323
☎ NATIONAL CENTER FOR LEARNING DISABILITIES	1-888-575-7373
☎ NATIONAL LITERACY HOTLINE	1-800-228-8813

Websites

http://adulted.state.ky.us	www.ld.org
www.familit.org	www.nifl.gov
www.ket.org	

See pages 78–81 for additional Spanish, TTY and website resources.

Preschoolers—children ages three to five—are very capable. Their skills often make us think that they are more grown up than they really are. But preschoolers' views of the world are very different from ours. They do not always understand the difference between fantasy and reality. They often think that their thoughts and wishes cause things to happen. And they have a hard time seeing things from someone else's point of view.

Like younger children, preschoolers learn about the world through play. They need to handle real objects to understand how things work. They often want to do everything for themselves, but they still need our help and look to us for answers to their many questions.



Learning Social Skills

During play, children explore new feelings, ideas and skills. They create make-believe stories and games. They are learning how to play with each other, how to relate to adults and how to handle anger and aggression.

Many Preschoolers Think That...

- The sun follows them when they walk down the street.
- Anything that moves is alive.
- Objects, such as cars or toys, have feelings and desires.
- Everything has a purpose.
- Everything in the world is made by or for human beings.
- Imaginary friends are real.

Many Preschoolers Have These Qualities...

- Energy to explore, play and discover.
- Joy about their ability to do many things.
- Pride in their independence.
- A growing sense of right and wrong, guilt and shame.
- A sense of themselves as good or bad, weak or strong, attractive or ugly.
- Fear of the unknown.



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Sharing a bedtime story is a great way to encourage a love of reading.

School Readiness

By the time preschoolers are age 4, they begin to recognize that people, things and ideas can be represented by pictures, numbers, letters and words. You can help them learn by pointing out these symbols.

One of the most important things you can do is read stories to your child. Talk about the story to encourage your child's interest. Regular visits to the library also encourage an interest in reading. For more information call: ☎ **NATIONAL PARENT INFO NETWORK** or visit: www.npin.org.

Childhood Fears

It is normal for young children to have times when they are fearful. Preschoolers may be afraid of strangers or of being separated from you. They may be afraid of dogs, other animals, loud noises or the dark. They are more likely to develop fears when learning something new, when adjusting to a new situation or when there is other stress in their lives. Fears may surface at night in dreams. Reassure your child and let him know that it is natural to be afraid at times. For tips on helping children in difficult times, see page 55.

Things You Can Do

Tips for Parents

- Help your child take on new challenges and responsibilities.
- Support your child's interest in pretend play. Join in when invited.
- Don't expect your child to see the world as you do.
- Include your child in everyday projects such as baking, shopping or gardening.
- Respond with understanding and reassurance to your child's fears—whether they are real or imagined. See page 55.
- Monitor TV time. Keep your child away from programs that show violence and aggression. Violent images can scare your child and set a bad example for dealing with anger. For information on educational television, visit: www.ket.org.

Prepare Your Child for School

- Nurture your child's curiosity about the world.
- Answer your child's questions with simple explanations.
- Create opportunities for your child to play with other children.
- Read and discuss a rich variety of stories with your child. Point out letters, numbers and pictures.
- Make regular visits to the library and take your child to interesting places, such as museums, aquariums and zoos.
- To find a preschool, see page 33. If you have a low income, ask your local school district about Head Start.
- Find out about family literacy programs. Call your school district or library. See page 25 or call: ☎ **KY ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY**. Visit: <http://adulthood.state.ky.us>.

Where To Find Help

Free Statewide Phone Numbers

☎ KY ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY (VOICE/TTY)	1-800-928-7323
☎ NATIONAL PARENT INFO NETWORK (VOICE/TTY)	1-800-583-4135

Websites

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www.ket.org	

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Notes