

 **S.A.E.S. Pre-K Newsletter**

**Welcome to the first of four pre-K newsletters you will be receiving**

 **as you prepare your family for Kindergarten.**

Each newsletter will focus on a specific area of development: awareness of self and environment, cognitive skills, language and communication, and physical development. There will be an outline of skills your child should be able to do at this point in his/her development, as well as some fun activities you and your child can do together to strengthen and develop these skills before entering Kindergarten.

**What is Awareness of Self & Environment?**

This is a child’s understanding of the world and his or her ability to make connections with home and community experiences (EYE-DA).

**Why is this important?**

The world is a busy and often overwhelming place. Helping your child to make sense of the world around him/herself will help him/her feel more comfortable and better able to adapt to new situations.

The more self-aware your child is, the better he/she will respond to social situations, such as playgrounds and the classroom, and the better able he/she will be to form positive peer relationships.

**Model for your child:** Children look to trusted adults for guidance, modeling, and boundaries. It takes lots of practice for a child to learn and understand a skill; explain what is expected, why it is expected, and how to do it. Your child will make mistakes and that is okay; be consistent and they will blossom!

**What should my child be able to do at this stage of development?**

The

key

skills

in

**environmental**

**awareness** are:

» Identifying opposites

» Pointing to and naming basic colours, animals, and shapes

» Identifying and naming body parts

» Recognizing community members such as police officers, fire fighters, doctors, dentists, etc.

» Identifying parts of a whole, such as wheels on a car

» Identifying groups, such as cats, dogs, and monkeys are all animals

The key skills in **self-awareness** are:

» Identifying and naming body parts

» Drawing a person with some detail

» Saying full name and age

» Recognizing own name in print

» Identifying common feelings and emotions, such as happy, sad, angry



Now for the fun stuff!

**Children learn best through play.** Play allows children to learn about turn-taking, losing AND winning graciously; play expands their vocabulary and expressive language, and it helps them develop direction-following skills.

**Modeling play** is an important role for care-givers to fill. When playing with your child, be sure to use positive self-talk, to explain steps you are taking to complete a task, and to model appropriate reactions to both winning and losing.

**Environmental Awareness Activities**

**I-Spy –** When playing this game, add in a location! For example, “I spy something blue under the chair” or “I spy something orange on the table”.

**Color Challenge –** Just like a scavenger hunt, have your child “hunt” for objects of a given color. For example, “I want you to find something that is pink and bring it to me”. Take turns with your child so he/she gets to ask for an item and you get to find it!

**Shape Search** – When you are out and about with your child, challenge him/her to find shapes in the environment. For example, “Look at that window; it has 4 little squares in it!”

**What Doesn’t Belong? –** Make a small group of items (4-5) and ask your child “What doesn’t belong?” Then have your child make a group and ask you “What doesn’t belong?”

**Self-Awareness Activities**

**Head & Shoulders –** Sing and play this childhood favourite with your child. When you begin, be sure to start slowly so your child can repeat the body part names. When he/she has mastered it, use different body parts!

**When You’re Happy and You Know It** – Sing and play along with your child; be sure to include various feelings (happy, sad, scared, silly) with appropriate gestures.

**Feelings Jar:** In a jar, place pieces of paper with various feeling words on them. Have your child choose a “feeling” from the jar; you read the word and then have your child explain what this feeling would look/feel/sound like. For example, “happy” would look like smiling, it would feel bubbly on the inside, and it would sound like laughing.

**Still have questions? Contact:**

Family and Child Education Anglophone West at 1-855-454-3762.