

Family Focus

Building a Foundation for School Success

Getting Ready for School Science with Your Child Everyday

Young children are natural born scientists! They are curious. When they play, they observe, experiment, ask questions and try to figure out how things work. Observing, experimenting, asking questions, and trying to figure things out are all key skills for school and life. You can support your little scientist!

Why is this important for school readiness?

Our world is changing and becoming more technological every day. Studies show that children can develop an interest in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) when they are young. These areas will provide more career opportunities in their future.

Science helps children develop many different skills. They develop scientific skills like exploring, observing, making predictions, experimenting, and problem solving. Science also helps children develop their senses and awareness of the world around them.

Through science, children develop the ability to communicate their ideas, remain organized and focused, and develop critical thinking skills they will need throughout their lives.

Children are hands-on learners who explore the physical world around them through their play. "Like scientists using the scientific method, children have their theories about how the world works (their hypotheses), they test those theories (the experiment), they observe what happens (document the findings), and then try again (revise the theory and conduct another experiment)".

Science appeals to children because it gives them a way to be smart and to solve mysteries.

What can families do to help?

- ❖ Science can be fun and simple. You do not need fancy materials to provide your child with scientific learning opportunities. You can take advantage of everyday activities to support science by asking questions, talking with your child, and learning together.
- ❖ Observe outdoor animals such as birds, mammals (ex. squirrels), and insects. Talk about their features (ex. wings, legs), what they eat, and where they live.
- ❖ Watch the moon together as it appears to change shape over the course of a month. Draw pictures or take a picture to record the moon's different phases. Discuss what you both see and what is happening.
- ❖ In the kitchen, point out the changes that happen when you boil a liquid such as water or when cake batter is baked.
- ❖ It is important to ask your child questions when you participate in a scientific activity together. For example:
 - What happens when.....(we add food coloring to the play dough recipe)?
 - How did.....(the flower grow so tall)?
 - Why did.....(the flower's petals fall off)?
- ❖ Remember, when participating in science activities it is important to follow your child's lead while keeping them safe. When your child carries out a simple experiment and it does not work, it is important to talk about why it did not work and to try again. This is part of the process of learning science.
- ❖ Always encourage your child's interests in science.

