Countdown to Kindergarten

Kindergarten Parent Handbook

Peoria Unified School District
Peoria, Arizona
Reading

The early experiences children have with spoken and written language lay the foundation for them to become successful readers and writers. Research shows that reading aloud to children is the single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success in reading. The benefits are greatest when the child is an active participant, engaging in discussions about stories, learning to identify letters and words, and talking about the meaning of words.

Reading Tips

- **Read aloud to your child every day.** Find opportunities to read - at bedtime, waiting at the doctor's appointment, during a sibling's practice, whenever you have a free moment. Read lots of different kinds of books. Reread favorite books, even if you get tired of them before your child does. Have fun with books!

- **Read predictable books.** Your child will begin to join in saying the predictable words and phrases along with you.

- **Read poetry and other rhyming books to your child.** As you read to your child, stop before a rhyming word and ask your child to provide the word. "The fat cat sat on a ……(hat).

- **Talk about books.** Help your child relate his own life to the story. Talk about favorite parts. Encourage your child to ask questions about characters and events.

- **Have your child make predictions.** Discuss what will happen next and get excited when her predictions are correct.

- **Let your child hold the book.** Sit with your child so you can both see the pictures and words. Occasionally place your finger under the words that you are reading. Have your child help by turning the pages.

- **Build a book collection for your child.** Look for books at bookstores, garage sales, used book stores, and sales at the library. Purchase books as gifts for special occasions. Find a location that is easily accessible to your child to store their books.

- **Visit your public library.** Get a library card for your child and check out books frequently.
Recommended Reading

Albert the Albatross - Hoff
A Letter to Amy - Keats
Are You My Mother? - Eastman
Bagdad Ate It - Green
Bears in the Night - Berenstein
Bedtime for Frances - Hoban
Blueberries for Sal - McCloskey
Brown Bear, Brown Bear - Martin
Calico Cat Meets Book Worm - Charles
The Carrot Seed - Krauss
Cat in the Hat - Seuss
Clifford, The Big Red Dog - Bridwell
Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs - Barrett
Corduroy - Freeman
Could Be Worse - Stevenson
Curious George - Rey
Dandelion - Freeman
Deep in the Forest - Turkle
Each Peach, Pear, Plum - Ahlberg
Finders, Keepers - Well
The Five Pennies - Brenner
Foot Book - Seuss

Frederick - Lionni
Frog and Toad Are Friends - Lobel
Go Away, Dog - Noset
Go, Dog, Go - Eastman
Good Night Moon - Brown
Great Day for Up - Seuss
The Great Green Turkey Creek Monster - Flora
Green Eggs and Ham - Seuss
The Grouchy Ladybug - Carle
The Happy Lion - Fatio
Harry the Dirty Dog - Zion
Henny Penny - Galdone
Hey, Al - Younks
Hop on Pop - Seuss
I Don't, I Do - Jacobs
If I Ran the Zoo - Seuss
If I Were a Toad - Paterson
Inside, Outside, Upside, Down - Berenstein
It Looked Like Spilt Milk - Hoberman
Jump, Frog, Jump - Kalan
Katy and the Big Snow - Burton
Lentil - McCloskey
Leo the Late Bloomer - Kraus
Little Bear - Minarik
The Little Engine That Could - Piper
The Little House - Burton
Little Red Hen - Nestrick
Little Toot - Gramatky
Lyle, Lyle, Crocodile - Waber
Madeline - Bemelmans
The Maggie B. - Haas
Make Way for Ducklings - McCloskey
The Marvelous Mud Washing Machine - Wolcott
Max - Giovannetti
The Midnight Farm - Jeffers
Mike Mulligan and his Steam Shovel - Burton
Millions of Cats - Gag
Milton the Early Riser - Kraus
My Five Senses - Aliki
No Roses for Harry - Zion
Nobody Listens to Andrew - Guilfoile
Now One Foot, Not the Other - De Paola
Old Man Who Didn't Wash His Dishes - Krasilovsky
Out and About - Hughes
Play With Me - Ets

Polar Express - Van Allsburg
Rain Makes Applesauce - Scheer
Rainbow Goblins - De Rico
Rose for Pinkerton - Kellog
The Rose in My Garden - Lobel
Rosie's Walk - Hulchens
Simon's Book - Drescher
Six Foolish Fishermen - Elkin
The Snowy Day - Keats
Spring Is A New Beginning - Aglund
The Story of Ferdinand - Leaf
Sylvester and the Magic Pebble - Steig
Ten Apples Up On Top - Le Sieg
10 Bears in My Bed - Mack
There's An Alligator Under My Bed - Mayer
Tikki Tikki Tembo - Mosel
Tomie De Paola's Nursery Tales - De Paola
Treeful of Pigs - Lobel
Two Good Friends - Delton
The Very Hungry Caterpillar - Carle
Whistle for Willie - Keats
Whose Mouse Are You? - Kraus
The Wild Baby - Lindgren
The Wingdingdilly - Peet
Talk, Listen, and Play with Language

There was an old saying “children should be seen and not heard.” Research has proven quite the opposite. It tells us that for children to become readers, they should listen and talk a lot.

- **Talk to your child whenever you are doing things together**—eating, shopping, taking a walk, driving down the road.

- **Take your child to new places.** Visit local museums and parks. Talk about the new, unusual, and interesting things that you see and do.

- **Help your child follow directions.** Use short, clear sentences to let your child know what you want him to do. “Please put a napkin under each fork at the table.”

- **Teach your child the meaning of new words.** Tell your child the names of things around the house. Talk about things in pictures. “That’s a giraffe. We can see a giraffe in the zoo. Look at its long neck. Did you know that his neck helps him reach the leaves high up in the tree?”

- **Encourage your child to use language to express his feelings and ideas.** “What do you think about ...?” “How do you feel when someone calls you names?” “You need to use your words to tell me how you feel.”

- **Take time to listen and respond to your child.** Provide opportunities for your child to stay on a topic and take turns during a conversation.

- **Play with words.** Have fun with tongue twisters such as “She sells seashells by the seashore” and nursery rhymes such as “Twinkle, twinkle little star”.

- **Read books with rhymes.** Teach your child short poems, songs, and rhymes.

- **Listen for sounds in words.** Play games like “I spy”. Look around and say “I spy something that starts with the /s/ sound. What is it?” (sky). Have your child make up silly sentences with lots of words that start with the same sound, such as “Bob bought baby bunnies in blue berry basket.”

- **Help your child take spoken words apart and put them together.** Help your child separate the sounds in words, listening for beginning and ending sounds. Separate the sounds in words by stretching the word out; /c/ /a/ /t/. Have your child put the sounds together forming the word /cat/.
Rhymes and Rhythms

Way Up In The Apple Tree

Way up in the apple tree (stretch high)
Two little apples smiled at me
(continue to stretch, form two apples with thumbs and forefingers)
I shook that tree as hard as I could! (shake tree with both hands)
Down came the apples (reach high and bring arms down)
Mmmmm, they were good! (rub tummy)

Monkeys Jumping on the Bed

Five little monkeys jumping on the bed, (hold up five fingers and move as if jumping)
One fell off and bumped his head, (hold head in hands)
Mama called the doctor, and the doctor said, (as if using the phone)
“No more monkeys jumping on the bed!” (shake index finger, “No!”)

Four little monkeys... (hold up appropriate number of fingers and repeat verse)
Three little monkeys... (hold up appropriate number of fingers and repeat verse)
Two little monkeys... (hold up appropriate number of fingers and repeat verse)
One little monkey... (hold up appropriate number of fingers and repeat verse)

Beehive

Here is the beehive. (closed fist)
Where are the bees?
Hidden away where nobody sees.
They’re coming out.
(raise each finger as counting)
They’re alive.
Bees, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, BUZZ!
(wiggle fingers and buzz)

Ten In A Bed

There were ten in a bed and the little one said,
“Roll over, roll over.” (rolling motion)
So they all rolled over and one fell out.
There were nine in the bed and the little one said,
“Roll over, roll over.”
So they all rolled over and one fell out...
(This is repeated until you get to the number one. Each time “roll over” is said,
rolling motion is dramatized.)
There was one in the bed and the little one said,
“Good night!”
Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear
Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear
Turn around.
Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear,
Touch the ground.
Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear,
Tie your shoe.
Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear,
Goodbye to you.

Heads and Shoulders
Heads, shoulders,
Knees and toes, knees and toes.
Heads, shoulders,
Knees and toes, knees and toes.
Eyes and ears, and mouth and nose.
Heads, shoulders,
Knees and toes, knees and toes.

Nursery Rhymes

Jack and Jill
Jack and Jill went up the hill.
To fetch a pail of water,
Jack fell down and broke his crown
And Jill came tumbling after.

Humpty and Dumpty
Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall,
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall,
All the King’s horses and all the King’s men
Couldn’t put Humpty Dumpty together again.

Peter, Peter Pumpkin Eater
Peter, Peter, pumpkin eater,
Had a wife and couldn’t keep her,
Put her in a pumpkin shell
And there he kept her very well.

Baa! Baa! Black Sheep
Baa, Baa, black sheep, have you any wool?
Yes sir, yes sir, three bags full,
One for my master and one for my dame,
And one for the little boy who lives down the lane.

The Cat and The Fiddle
Hey! diddle, diddle!
The cat and the fiddle,
The cow jumped over the moon,
The little dog laughed to see
Such sport,
And the dish ran away with the spoon.

Hickory, Dickory, Dock
Hickory, Dickory, Dock
The mouse ran up the clock,
The clock struck one,
The mouse ran down,
Hickory, Dickory, Dock.
Letters, Letters, and More Letters

Sharing the alphabet with your child helps him begin to learn the names of letters, become familiar with their letter shapes, and start to learn some of their letter sounds.

- **Help your child learn to recognize his name in print.** Make a name sign for your child's room that he can decorate. Print your child's name as he watches, saying each letter as you write it. Encourage your child to write his name. In kindergarten only the first letter of a name is capitalized, so you may want to work on this.

- **Teach your child the alphabet song.** Some alphabet books have songs and chants that you can sing together.

- **Point out letters and words that are all around.** Read store signs, billboards, traffic signs, magazine ads, food labels, and posters. Point out letters in signs, asking your child to find specific letters. Your child will begin to read signs that he sees over and over again.

- **Put magnetic letters on your refrigerator.** Have your child name letters as they are moved around and played with. He may even be able to make his name and simple words such as "mom" and "dad" with the letters. If you have multiple sets of letters your child can sort the letters placing together all of the "c's", "h's", etc.

- **Play games with letters.** There are many commercial alphabet games and puzzles on the market. If you have a computer www.starfall.com is a great site with alphabet activities. Children enjoy just circling letters on a magazine page. You can start by having them find the first letter in their name and circling it every time it is on the page.

- **Watch educational videos, DVDs, and TV shows such as "Between the Lions," "Blue's Clues," "Reading Rainbow," and "Sesame Street" with your child.** Take charge of the television that your child watches, selecting appropriate shows and spending time answering questions and talking about the programs. Parents' Choice reviews and rates children's media. You can contact them by writing to: Parents' Choice Foundation, Suite 303, 201 West Padonia Road, Timonium, MD 21093 or visit www.parents-choice.org/

- **Provide opportunities for your child to write.** Children's messages may be scribbles, pictures, or possibly a few letters.
Peoria Unified School District— Parent Handbook "Countdown to Kindergarten"

**Hands-on Math**

Hands-on activities that involve counting, measuring, sorting, shapes are a good way to introduce your child to math.

**Numbers, Numbers, Everywhere**

- **Talk about numbers and use number concepts in daily routines.**
  - "Let's get out two bowls for ice cream. One for you and one for me."
  - "Can you help me choose 5 apples?" (grocery shopping)
  - "Let's count how high your tower is: one, two, three, four, five, six blocks. How high is my tower?"

- **Talk about numbers that matter most to your child- her age, her address, her phone number, her height and weight.** Children are able to learn many important math concepts by focusing on these personal numbers
  - Time (before, during, and after events, days, months, years, older, younger, yesterday, today, tomorrow) Talk about going on vacation in five days and countdown until the special date.
  - Where you live (addresses and telephone numbers) These numbers will be important to your child. Point out your house numbers and help your child read them. Help your child dial their telephone number on a play phone.
  - Length and weight (inches, feet, longer, shorter, pounds, heavier, lighter) "Let's see who is taller you or Amy?"

- **Help your child learn math as he plays.**
  - Play games that have scoring like throwing a ball into a basket, which encourages a child to count. Have your child roll dice and count the dots to see how many spaces they can move on a game-board.
  - Read counting books with your child.
  - Playing with blocks can help your child sort objects by color and shape.

- **Provide many opportunities for your child to count.** Begin by touching each thing as you count it-one (touch it), two (as you touch the second object), and so on. Count cookies, cars, legs on a chair, chairs at the table, French fries, buttons, anything that interests your child. When traveling count cars, trucks, volkswagons, signs, etc. Have your child look for numerals on signs and license plates. First look for a 1, then 2, 3, 4, 5, and so on.

- **Provide opportunities for your child to learn math concepts as he helps with chores.** Your child can help by measuring ingredients as you cook together. Doing laundry provides the opportunity to measure detergent; sort dirty clothes into piles of dark and light colors;
match and sort clean socks; and sort clean clothes into piles of shirts, pants, and underwear.

- **Provide opportunities for your child to play with different size containers.** Adding various containers to sand and water play allow children to explore measurement terms such as more and less.

- **Provide additional opportunities for your child to sort which helps to develop thinking and classification skills.** Your child can sort money – making little piles of pennies, nickels, dimes, and quarters. Other sorting objects include: buttons, marbles, candy, beads, colored cereal, keys, nuts, bolts, matchbox cars, etc.

- **Provide opportunities for your child to copy and create patterns.** Arrange objects such as colored buttons in a simple pattern such as one red, one blue, one yellow, one red, one blue, one yellow, etc. Have your child copy the pattern you made. Start a sequence pattern such as penny, nickel, dime, penny... See if your child can continue the pattern you started.

- **Provide opportunities for your child to locate shapes.** Go on shape walks in your house and/or your yard looking for various shapes such as circles, squares, rectangles, triangles, etc. Cut out shapes can be sorted and used to create patterns.
Social and Emotional Readiness

The following qualities are ones that you can help your child develop before starting kindergarten:

- **Cooperation**: Children need to get along with other children and learn how to share and take turns.
- **Self-control**: Children need to know acceptable ways to express feelings. They need to know that behaviors such as screaming, hitting, pushing, and biting are not acceptable.
- **Empathy**: Children need to have an interest in others and understand how they feel.
- **Confidence**: Children need to feel good about themselves and believe that they will be successful.
- **Independence**: Children need to do things for themselves.
- **Motivation**: Children need to have the desire to learn.
- **Curiosity**: Naturally children are curious and this is an important prerequisite to learning.
- **Persistence**: Children need to finish what they start.

Here are some things that you can do to help your child develop these qualities:

- **Provide opportunities for your child to play with other children and to be with adults who are not family members.** Children are more likely to get along with teachers and classmates if they have experiences with different adults and children.
- **Provide opportunities for your child to do things on her own.** Children gain confidence by dressing themselves, cleaning their rooms, and helping you with simple chores such as emptying the dishwasher or setting the table.
- **Provide opportunities for your child to make choices and work out problems.** You might ask your child whether he would like to color or play with playdough. Rather than solving all of your child’s problems, ask him what he might want to do to keep his little sister from knocking his train off the tracks.
- **Provide appropriate discipline.** Children need to have limits set for them. They need to know what you expect. Discipline needs to be firm, but loving. For example, “I love you, but it is not okay for you to push your sister. I get angry when you do that.”
• **Provide opportunities for quiet behavior.** Children need to learn when it is appropriate to listen and/or use quiet voices. Story time at the public library is one activity that will help your child prepare for school.

• **Set up daily routines.** After dinner set aside time for quiet play, possibly a bath, and then story time. Involve your child in selecting clothing for the next day. Practice the morning routine of eating breakfast and getting dressed. Establish an earlier bedtime a few weeks prior to school starting.

• **Show a positive attitude toward school and learning.** Children are naturally curious. When your child develops an interest help foster it by providing learning opportunities for your child. This might involve planting a few seeds, experimenting with a magnet, taking a trip to a local museum, visiting computer sites, or reading a book on the topic of interest. Children will be excited about starting school when parents show excitement. Talk about all the exciting things that will happen in kindergarten. You may want to read a few of the following books about starting school to your child.

  • *Berenstain Bears Go To School*  Berenstain, Stan and Jan; This is a story about sister bear, who overcomes her fears of starting kindergarten.
  
  • *Franklin Goes to School*  Bourgeois, Paulette; Franklin the turtle overcomes his fears about starting school.
  
  • *My First Day of School*  Hallinan, Patrick K.; This story is written in a fun verse about the start of school.
  
  • *Jessica*  Henkes, Kevin; This is a story about a little girl with an imaginary friend named Jessica. On her first day of kindergarten she meets a real friend named Jessica.
  
  • *When You Go to Kindergarten*  Howe, James; This book depicts the everyday happenings of kindergarten including bus rides, bathrooms, fire drills, and the teacher using photographs as the illustrations.
  
  • *Froggy Goes to School*  London, Jonathan; This book is written in a way that encourages active participation. Children see that school will be fun.
  
  • *The Kissing Hand*  Penn, Audrey; This story is about the separation faced by parents and children.
  
  • *Miss Bindergarten Gets Ready for Kindergarten*  Slate, Joseph; This is a rhyming book about a teacher and her kindergarten class preparing for the first day of school.
Young children can express their imagination through their art, as they develop their hand and eye coordination that they will need for writing.

Here is a suggested list of materials:

- Crayons
- Water-soluble felt-tipped markers
- Watercolors, brushes, and finger paint
- Glue/glue sticks
- Different kinds of paper (construction, drawing, and butcher paper)
- Safety scissors (With your guidance provide opportunities for your child to use scissors. Teach scissor safety.)
- Fabric scraps or objects or objects that can be glued to paper (string, yarn, cotton balls, sticks)

A few tips to encourage creativity:

- Encourage your child to draw whatever he wants.
- Don’t “fix” or “finish” your child’s art. Let your child tell you about his creation.
- Provide your child with the opportunity to use many kinds of materials. As you share new materials, show your child how to use them.
- Display your child’s art where others can admire it (a refrigerator is just one place).

### Art Recipes

#### Play dough
4 C. flour  
1 C. salt  
4 TBSP. oil  
Add water until you reach the correct consistency. Knead with the flour. You may want to add food coloring to the water before mixing.

#### Finger Paint
2 TBSP. flour  
3 TBSP. water  
Powdered fruit drink or food coloring  
Mix to a smooth consistency. Add powdered fruit drink or food coloring.

#### Salt Painting
1/2 C. liquid starch  
2 C. salt  
1/2 C. water  
Food coloring  
Use this paint on cardboard or heavy paper. When it dries it sparkles in the sunlight.

#### Bubble Blowing
Combine a 2/3 cup of water and 1/3 cup of liquid detergent in a quart container. Dip a blower in the solution and blow!
Readiness Checklist

The following list (adapted from the ed.gov site) can help you as your child begins his/her journey toward kindergarten. These are goals for both you and your child.

**Good Health and Physical Well-Being**

*My child:*
- Eats a balanced diet
- Gets plenty of rest
- Has had all of the necessary immunizations
- Runs, jumps, and plays outdoors; participating in activities to help develop his large muscles
- Works puzzles; colors; paints; tears paper; uses scissors; works with play dough; and other activities that will help develop small muscles

**Social and Emotional Preparation**

*My child:*
- Is learning to explore and investigate new activities
- Is learning to complete tasks
- Is learning to work well alone and to do tasks by himself
- Has many opportunities to interact with other children and is learning to cooperate with others
- Is willing to learn
- Is learning self-control
- Will follow simple instructions

**Self-Help Skills**

*My child:*
- Can use a tissue
- Can use the restroom independently
- Can zip and button clothing

**Language and General Knowledge**

*My child:*
- Has many opportunities to talk and listen
- Is read to every day
- Has books and other reading materials available
- Is learning about print and books
- Is encouraged to ask questions
- Is encouraged to solve problems
- Is encouraged to sort and classify objects
- Is learning to write his name
- Is learning to count and play counting games
- Is learning to identify and name colors and shapes
- Has opportunities to listen to music and respond to the rhythm
Things I Can Do

I can write my name. I begin with a capital letter and all the other letters are small.

I know the parts of my body.

I can tie my shoes.

I can say my telephone number.

I can say my address (including city and state).

I can name my numbers.

I can cut with scissors.

I know these shapes.
Position and Direction

Put a penny inside the heart.
Put a penny below the heart.
Put a penny above the heart.

Put a penny on the clown’s nose.
Put a penny next to the clown’s face.
Put a penny between the clown’s eyes.
Put a penny under the clown’s chin.
Following Directions

Color the first circle red.
Color the last circle blue.
Color the middle circle yellow.

Color the first triangle green.
Color the last triangle orange.
Color the middle triangle purple.

Color the first rectangle green.
Color the second rectangle red.
Color the third rectangle blue.
Writing Manuscript Letters

Manuscript letters are made of a circle, or parts of it, and straight lines. We use a clock face as a reference point for starting and forming the letters. As a child writes circle letters, the pencil is placed on two on the clock and moves up and over to ten on the clock. Line letters always start at the top and pull down.

Letters that begin at 2 on the clock:

\[
a^2 c^2 d^2 f g^2 o^2 s^2 q u^2
\]

Letters that begin with a line:

bhijklmnoprtuvwxyz

Capital Letters

ABDEFGHIJKLMNOPMN

Numerals

1234567890
Food and Nutrition Program

Eating lunch at school may soon become one of your child’s favorite times of the day. You may wish to send a lunch with your child or take advantage of the meals served by the cafeteria. All students will be required to wash their hands before lunch, and all food is to be eaten in the cafeteria.

Our cafeterias serve nutritionally balanced meals each regular school day. The cost of the lunch is $2.50 per day and breakfast is $1.50 per day. A carton of milk is supplied with each lunch or breakfast or may be purchased separately for 35 cents. Students will be able to select one entrée and choose from vegetables, fruits and varieties of milk as part of their lunch. Children who have food allergies should bring a signed form from their doctor in order to receive an appropriate lunch.

An account can be set up with our cafeterias to pay for your child’s meals. You may deposit money to the account in your school cafeteria any morning before school, or you may visit www.MySchoolBucks.com to set up the account. While your child may pay cash for his/her lunch, the practice is discouraged as the school is not able to refund lost money. Lunch charges are issued on an emergency basis only. Students in kindergarten through eighth grades are allowed two charges. After the second charge, students are given a designated meal that is available to all students. All charges are to be paid promptly to the cafeteria before school begins (in the mornings only).

Free and reduced lunch applications are available on-line through the district website and at your school’s front office or cafeteria.
To school and back...

Have a Safe Trip

Nobody wants to get hurt, but not wanting to get hurt isn’t enough. You also have to keep safety rules in mind. To keep yourself safe on the way to school and back, follow these rules:

Walking

- Pick the most direct route to school, with the fewest street crossings.
- Obey all traffic markings and signals. Look left, right, and then left again. Stop and look even at a green light or a stop sign.
- When not crossing a street, stay on the sidewalk, or if there isn’t a sidewalk, stay as far off the road as possible, and walk facing the traffic. That way, drivers will see you, and you will see them coming.
- Always obey crossing guards when present.
- Go directly to school and straight home-or to a caregiver’s house-unless you have your parents’ permission to go someplace else.
- NEVER run out into the street to chase a ball, or other objects. If you have to go out into the street, stop and look three ways first. Wait until there are no vehicles coming.
- Never push and shove your friends while walking on a sidewalk or along a road—and don’t let them do it to you. Someone could be pushed out into the street and hit by a car.
- Don’t go into empty buildings, alleys, or other deserted places. These places may look interesting, but they may not be safe.

Biking

- Follow the rules of the road that apply to all vehicles.
- If you have a helmet—wear it.
- Learn and obey all the laws for bicycle riding. Be sure your bicycle has the proper lights and other safety equipment.
- Always ride in the direction of traffic, and obey all stop signs and traffic lights.
- Always be on the look-out for cars or other vehicles and stay out of their way.
- Don’t try to carry a passenger on your bicycle.
- If you carry books or other items, put them in a saddlebag or backpack.
- Never try to carry anything in your hands while riding a bicycle.

If A Stranger Tries to Talk to You or Offers You a Ride

- Say NO and walk away quickly.
- If the person follows you and tries to bother you, look for a policeman or other adult.
- Don’t go anywhere with a stranger—even if they say they’re a friend of your parents.
- Don’t go with a person even if they say they need help. Walk away quickly, and tell an adult.
- If a stranger bothers you, or tries to talk you into getting in a car, remember what the person and the car look like. Give this information to an adult, parent, teacher, or police officer immediately.
- Try not to walk through parts of town where there aren’t very many people around, or where there are a lot of deserted buildings. If you have to walk through an area like that, walk with a group of friends.
To school and back…

Have a Safe Ride

Maybe you ride the bus to school and home every day. Maybe you only ride once in a while, to a game or field trip. Even if you only ride a school bus once or twice a year, you want those trips to be safe ones for you and your friends. Your bus driver does everything possible to make sure every trip is a safe one—but you have to help.

Getting On and Off the Bus

Most people who are hurt in school bus accidents are hurt outside the bus, not while they’re on the bus. The most dangerous place to be is close to the bus: the bus driver can’t see you, and sometimes other drivers can’t either.

To be sure you don’t get hit, follow these simple rules:

• While waiting to get on the bus, stand away from the bus, where the driver can see you.
• Don’t walk up to the bus until the driver opens the door for you.
• After you get off the bus, turn toward the front of the bus and take ten giant steps. Look back at the driver—be sure he or she sees you. Wait for the driver to give you a signal, and then walk in front of the bus and cross the street.

Other Rules to Keep You Safe

If you have to cross the street, always walk in front of the bus, where the driver can see you. Never walk behind the bus. The driver can’t see you and might back up and run you over. Do not run and play on the sidewalk or in the street while waiting for the bus. Wait quietly on the sidewalk, or if there is no sidewalk, back away from the street. If you drop something and it falls under the bus, tell the driver. DO NOT REACH UNDER THE BUS! Get on and off the bus quietly. Never push or shove at the door, and always use the handrail.

On the Bus

Bus riding time is a good time to talk quietly with your friends, or read or go over your homework. Don’t do anything that might make the driver take his or her attention off driving. You could cause an accident. While on the bus:

• Stay in your seat, facing front.
• Do not play radios or tape recorders.
• Do not bring animals onto the bus.
• Do not fight, scuffle, or move around in any way while the bus is moving.
• Don’t yell or use bad language.
• Never throw objects inside the bus or out the window.
• Do not stick your head, arms, hands, or any part of your body out the windows.
• Do not stand up until the bus has completely stopped moving.
• Do not talk to the driver unless it is absolutely necessary. If you must talk to the driver, wait until the bus is stopped at a red light or a stop sign.
• Be absolutely silent at railroad tracks, so the driver can hear if there is a train coming.
Bibliography


National Reading Panel. (2000). Teaching Children to Read: An Evidence-Based Assessment of the Scientific Research Literature on Reading and Its Implications for Reading Instruction. Washington DC: National Institute of Child Health and Human Development.


Resources for Parents


Lyrics and melodies for children's songs - www.kididdles.com

International Children's Digital Library - Thousands of digital books that you are able to read on-line - www.icdlbook.org

Child safety site - www.netsmartz.org/netparents.htm

Download the pamphlets, A Child Becomes a Reader: Birth Through Preschool and A Child Becomes a Reader: Kindergarten Through Grade 3 - www.nifl.gov/partnershipforreading

Articles and information about child development, discipline, choosing child care, etc.- www.nncc.org

Literacy information - www.nochildleftbehind.gov/parents/index.htm

Characters such as Clifford and Arthur help children explore reading and writing activities - www.pbs.kids.org

Ideas for creating literacy rich homes - www.rif.org/parents

A site for alphabet activities and interactive stories - www.starfall.com