So the child in your life is on the way to kindergarten? Congratulations!

We know this can be an exciting, yet anxious time for caregivers and children. We created this toolkit to help you and your family navigate the development skills needed for kindergarten readiness.

The development of the whole child – physical, social, emotional and cognitive – is an approach that values the human spirit and potential. While many of us focus on the basics of letter and number recognition or reading skills, kindergarten readiness encompasses many interconnected skills. Children grow at different rates, so areas of development often overlap. Development in one area is reinforced and enhanced by growth in others.

On My Way to K with PBS KIDS has a whole-child approach to preparing children for kindergarten with resources that support all of the key developmental areas kids need to be successful and become life-long learners.

HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

“When I was little…” is such a powerful sentence starter and brings memories to all. As a caregiver, you have the unique opportunity to create experiences that can end the sentence with tales of life changing moments and the love of learning.

As you proceed through this toolkit, you’ll cultivate an understanding of how children develop as they approach the kindergarten age, recognize how the suggested activities are similar to what you’re already doing with your child, and discover your inner PBS KID!

Each section of this caregiver-friendly toolkit includes:

• **How I Grow** – Descriptions and definitions of each developmental area
• **Help Me Grow** – Simple, affordable and developmentally appropriate strategies for caregivers designed to nurture and empower children as they build confidence in their abilities
• **Let’s Explore Together** – Innovative television and mobile resources from your favorite PBS KIDS characters that provide caregivers the opportunity to model life-long learning
• **PBS KIDS Activities** – Fun, offline activities to encourage hands-on exploration and conversation
## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. **APPROACHES TO LEARNING** ................................................................. 1-2
   - Activity: PBS KIDS – Catapults .............................................................. 3
   - Activity: Peg + Cat – Missing in My Room ........................................... 4

2. **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT** ............................................................... 5-6
   - Activity: PBS KIDS – “I Tried It” Taste Test ........................................ 7
   - Activity: PBS KIDS – Make a Paper Airplane ........................................ 8

3. **SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT** .................................... 9-10
   - Activity: Sesame Street – Elmo’s Kindness Bingo ................................ 11
   - Activity: Peg + Cat – Morning Routine ............................................... 12

4. **LANGUAGE, COMMUNICATION AND EMERGENT LITERACY** ....... 13-14
   - Activity: PBS KIDS – Book Bingo ....................................................... 15
   - Activity: Wild Kratts – Wildlife Journal .............................................. 16

5. **MATHEMATICAL THINKING** ............................................................. 17-18
   - Activity: Peg + Cat – I Spy Peg ............................................................ 19
   - Activity: PBS KIDS – Code Cracker ..................................................... 20

6. **SCIENTIFIC INQUIRY** ...................................................................... 21-22
   - Activity: Nature Cat – Make a Bird Feeder ......................................... 23
   - Activity: Cat in the Hat – What Floats Your Boat ................................. 24

7. **SOCIAL STUDIES** ............................................................................. 25-26
   - Activity: Let’s Go Luna — Color Country Flags ................................... 27
   - Activity: Arthur – Sharing Stories ....................................................... 28

8. **CREATIVE EXPRESSION THROUGH THE ARTS** ............................ 29-30
   - Activity: PBS KIDS – Mischievous Monsters ...................................... 31
   - Activity: Pinkalicious & Peterrific – Create Your Own Accidental Art ... 32

**RESOURCE PAGES**
- Recipes and How to Make ................................................................. 33
- I Can Cards ......................................................................................... 34-35
- Everyday Smart Inspiration ............................................................... 36
- PBS KIDS Schedule ........................................................................... 37
- PBS KIDS Programming By Topic ...................................................... 38
- PBS KIDS Resources for Parents ....................................................... 39
- Back to School Checklist ................................................................. 40
- My First Week of School Planner ...................................................... 41
- Community Resources ................................................................. 42
Approaches to Learning is a unique and critical domain of children’s development. It addresses the “how” of learning, ways children deal with new environments, interactions and discoveries, and describes children’s attitudes and dispositions toward learning. Most importantly, Approaches to Learning can help foster a love of learning that stays with your child throughout their life.

**HOW I GROW: APPROACHES TO LEARNING**

**Eagerness and Curiosity**
As soon as a child shows curiosity and an eagerness to learn new things and participate in new experiences, they also learn to deal with setbacks and obstacles as part of the process.

**Persistence**
This skill is necessary to attend to challenging tasks for a brief period and empowers the child to try alternative solutions or seek help when needed.

**Creativity**
Your child’s ability to problem solve requires flexibility of thought, imagination and willingness to adapt familiar materials in new ways.

**Planning and Reflection**
Initial signs of trial and error allow learning from experiences. Support from adults enables children to reflect and think through steps, thus beginning to plan solutions.
HELP ME GROW: CAREGIVER STRATEGIES

Teeny House
Spark your child’s curiosity by turning an ordinary shoe box into a teeny house. Cut out some windows and a door (ahead of time) and use everyday objects to create furnishings. Don’t forget to decorate the outside as well!

I Wonder
Create opportunities to model problem solving and “thinking out loud” strategies during play such as, “I see your toy car rolled under the couch! I wonder what would happen if we took the cushions and placed them in front of the opening. Let’s try it!”

Think Inside the Box
Teach persistence, planning and reflection by creating a square with painter's tape on the floor. Encourage your child to place blocks only within the square. What other shapes can you try?

LET’S EXPLORE TOGETHER

WATCH

PLAY

The Cat in the Hat Builds That!
Cat in the Hat: Bridge-a-rama
Dinosaur Train: Fossil Finder
Arthur: Treehouse Designer

PBS Parents Play and Learn
There are lots of great engineering projects that can be made together at home as a family. Check out this plan for making catapults!

**MATERIALS**

a) Cardboard tube  
b) Elastic band  
c) Wooden spoon  
d) Small, soft object to launch

Don’t have these materials available? Design your own plan with materials that you do have!

**BUILDING THE CATAPULTS**

a) Loop the elastic band over the cardboard tube twice to make an X  
b) Insert the wooden spoon handle under the X  
c) Place the soft object on the end of the spoon  
d) Stomp on the spoon handle to launch!

Try moving the handle up or down to see how it changes how your catapult launches. Try launching things of different weights and sizes to see how that affects how far or how high objects go.

**MAKE IT A GAME**

Set up buckets or other containers at different distances and give them point values. See who can get the most points by launching their soft objects into the buckets!

You can find other ideas for fun engineering projects that use household objects by searching pbslearningmedia.org for ‘simple engineering ideas/projects.’
Cat and I have soooo much cool stuff. We never get tired of playing with it. The only problem is, we can never find it all! Help Cat and me keep track of some of our coolest stuff. Help us find:

- 1 stegosaurus!
- 4 pyramids!
- 1 horse!
- 3 baseballs!
- 1 number five!
- 4 crayons!
- 1 number 7!

As you find things, number them so we can find them easily. Then color in Cat and me relaxing in my room.
Physical development of the body is the foundation of every aspect of a child’s interactions and learning, including health and wellness, gross motor and fine motor development.

**HOW I GROW: PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

**Health and Wellness**

We can teach and help our children grow up with an attitude of wellness and control over their own body and health. Experiences at the doctor or dentist are great opportunities to talk about the helpers that care for our health.

**Motor Skills**

Foster your child’s increasing independence and self-confidence. Celebrate their ability to demonstrate skills that strengthen the coordination of movements and control of large muscles (gross motor) and small muscles (fine motor).
Physical Development

HELP ME GROW: CAREGIVER STRATEGIES

Muscle Power
While picking up toys, point out how strong our bodies are and how we can carry objects and even hug people we love.

Paint Like Michelangelo
Tape a piece of paper under a coffee table or desk and encourage your child to lie under the table and draw with an extended forearm. This activity strengthens hand muscles and builds hand-eye coordination.

Make a Nest
Whip up a batch of homemade dough (see recipe on page 33) and encourage your child to roll small balls that resemble eggs. Then have them roll a larger ball and use their fingers to push in the middle to create a “nest” for their dough “eggs.”

Ice Cream Scoops
Ever wondered what to do with an empty paper towel roll? Build hand-eye coordination and balance by having your child use a “scoop” (the roll) and deliver the “ice cream” (ball) to another family member across the room.

Nutrition and Cooking
Cooking with kids creates an opportunity to model good food choices and strengthen fine motor skills. Build your child’s self-confidence in their ability to take care of their bodies with the yummy Apple Donut recipe on page 33.

LET’S EXPLORE TOGETHER

WATCH

PBS KIDS Party
Splash and Bubbles: Reeftown Rock Adventure
Sesame Street: Super Salad Diner
Daniel Tiger: Bathtime Helper

PLAY

Fetch! Lunch Rush
“I Tried It” Taste Test

Try a new food. It might taste good! If you try lots of different foods, you might find something new that you really enjoy.

Try out foods from each category:

- A Fruit, like an apple or a banana.
- A Protein, like beef or nuts.
- A Grain Food, like rice or cereal.
- A Vegetable, like broccoli or a carrot.
- A Dairy Food, like cheese or yogurt.

Then, draw or write the name of the food you tried in the box for each category and check the box for your result. Was it yummy, so-so, or not so good?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A Fruit</th>
<th>Yum!</th>
<th>So-So</th>
<th>Not So Good</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Vegetable</td>
<td>Yum!</td>
<td>So-So</td>
<td>Not So Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Protein</td>
<td>Yum!</td>
<td>So-So</td>
<td>Not So Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Dairy Food</td>
<td>Yum!</td>
<td>So-So</td>
<td>Not So Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Grain Food</td>
<td>Yum!</td>
<td>So-So</td>
<td>Not So Good</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ACTIVITY

Make a Paper Airplane

1. Fold paper in half the long way and reopen.

2. Fold the top two corners into the center spine of the paper.

3. Refold lengthwise and rotate the paper to lay on the table like this:

4. Fold the top left corner down to lay parallel to the bottom spine. Repeat this step on the other side.

5. Turn the paper over and repeat the last two steps. Your airplane should look like this!

Experiment!

How far can you make the airplane fly? You can measure the distance with a piece of string, with your steps or with a measuring tape.
Social and emotional readiness is a critical development in a child’s life. Social Emotional Development involves learning to interact with others, managing personal feelings and understanding the feelings of others. Positive relationships with adults also lead to positive relationships with peers.

**HOW I GROW: SOCIAL EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**Self-Regulation**

**Social** - You may notice your child begin to demonstrate a willingness to participate in daily routines that include self-care. A predictable environment empowers them to plan and follow through, knowing what to expect next.

**Emotional** - Your child is continuing to learn what causes certain feelings and realize that others may react to the same situation differently. They have learned to better manage the expression of emotions with coping strategies.

**Relationships**

**Social** - Growth in this area becomes evident as your child expresses an increased desire to interact with peers, engage in conversation and participate in group activities.

**Emotional** - Although children may experience shyness as they encounter new experiences, they are gaining self-confidence in their ability to build relationships with others.

**Problem Solving**

**Social** - As your child continues to demonstrate an awareness of others, you may observe them developing positive strategies that include taking turns, sharing and negotiating.

**Emotional** - A growing social environment fosters an initial awareness of what bullying means and your child is more likely to seek adult help when they see an injustice.
HELP ME GROW: CAREGIVER STRATEGIES

Feeling Faces
Here’s a great way to encourage discussions about emotions while strengthening fine motor skills. First, make a batch of some homemade dough (recipe on page 33) and then draw a variety of feeling faces (happy face, sad face, frowny face) on individual paper plates. Have your child roll out the dough to create facial expressions on the “face” and verbalize their feelings.

Calm Down Kit
Empower your child to manage their emotions by creating a kid-friendly basket filled with items they can use independently. Suggested items include I Can Cards (page 34-35), a favorite stuffed animal, a child-safe mirror, a squishy ball, a Glittery Gaze Discovery Bottle (page 33) and a book.

Glittery Gaze Discovery Bottle
Discovery bottles are a safe way to develop sensory experiences that stimulate your young child’s senses. The glittery contents can help refocus and calm your child, similar to the effects of a snow globe. Want to make your own discovery bottle? Look on page 33.

I Can Cards
As part of the Calm Down Kit or used independently, the I Can Cards provide visual strategies your child can use to manage moments of anger and frustration. Strategies could include: draw or color, take deep breaths, look at a book, ask to go for a walk, touch my toes, lie down and close my eyes, count, lean against the wall and sing.

LET’S EXPLORE TOGETHER

WATCH

Sesame Street: Elmo’s School Friends
Daniel Tiger: Spin & Sing
Splash and Bubbles: Finball Friends

PLAY

Daniel Tiger for Parents
Sesame Street: Elmo’s School Friends
Elmo’s Kindness Bingo

Each square has an act of kindness that you can do for somebody. Hang this bingo card on your refrigerator. Every time you do an act of kindness, circle it! Keep going until you’ve circled every space around Elmo.
Peg + Cat have a great morning routine. Talk to your child about their morning routine and follow the picture chart to help each day start out right!

1. Say "good morning" to someone.
2. Go to the bathroom.
3. Wash your face.
4. Brush your teeth.
5. Make your bed.
6. Eat a healthy breakfast.
7. Get dressed.
One of the most powerful ways to develop your child’s literacy skills is also the simplest: talk with your kids! Regular, meaningful conversations help kids learn new words and understand how to listen. It is also an opportunity for children to share their own stories and ideas. When caring adults talk to kids about the world — explaining how a recipe works or the rules of baseball — they are planting seeds of knowledge that will grow as kids become independent thinkers, readers and writers.

**HOW I GROW: LITERACY**

**Speaking and Listening**

Questions with “who,” “what,” “where,” “when” and “why” are great conversation starters and can help kids explore their thinking. To build the ability to listen, understand and follow multi-step directions, ask questions with “how” and encourage children to explain their thoughts.

**Read Alouds**

Engaging stories develop positive associations with books. Reading aloud to your child strengthens the part of their brain associated with visual imagery, the ability to understand stories and word meaning. They also build book handling skills called “concepts of print” like how to hold a book, which direction to turn the pages, what an author is, and where to find the title.

**Emergent Reading**

Young children are all “pre-readers” who pick up clues about reading from their environment. Families are powerful influences as life-long learners by demonstrating a love of books and the enjoyment of reading. As curious explorers who want to understand their world, books can help your child recognize letter sounds, identify letters and build vocabulary.
HELP ME GROW: CAREGIVER STRATEGIES

All Around Me
Kids love to look at photos and it’s a great way to grow vocabulary and strengthen oral language. Use your smartphone to take pictures of objects such as the crack in a sidewalk or a blade of grass, zooming in as close as possible. Also, look at photos of people they know and events they’ve enjoyed as these serve as great conversation starters and opportunities to practice descriptive language.

Retelling Box
Whether it’s everyday errands or a special vacation, collect random items throughout the day to create a retelling box. Retelling experiences can assist children in sequencing the events of the day, identify familiar letters or symbols and share their experiences with others.

Family Journal
A simple notebook and a pencil can be a great literacy tool. Throughout each week, have family members draw and/or write (as appropriate) about something they experienced. At the end of the week, share the journal and encourage discussion. By the time the notebook is complete, you’ll have a great record of your child’s emerging skills.

LET’S EXPLORE TOGETHER

WATCH

Clifford
The Big Red Dog
Sesame Street
Super WHY

PLAY

PBS Parents Play and Learn
Sesame Street: Story Book Builder
Super WHY: Paint by Letter
Word Girl: Magical Rescue
Plum’s Creaturizer
ACTIVITY

Book Bingo

Book Bingo for Every Reader

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>R</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A book about being kind</td>
<td>A book someone read to you</td>
<td>A book that inspired a movie</td>
<td>A book that inspired a PBS KIDS show</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A book about math</td>
<td>A book about making something</td>
<td>A book about a trip</td>
<td>A book you want to share with a friend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A book about family</td>
<td>A book about animals</td>
<td>A book you read to someone else</td>
<td>A book that makes you laugh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A book that makes you hungry</td>
<td>A book about being a good friend</td>
<td>A book about space exploration</td>
<td>Free Space #PBSKIDSread</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Share your completed card by tagging @PBSKIDS and use the hashtag #PBSKIDSread.
Wild Kratts Journal

Keeping a wildlife journal is a great way to build both observation and writing skills. You don’t have to go far – you’d be surprised what is going on just outside your front door!

**Directions:**

**Creating the Journal:**
(You may want to ask an adult for some help.)
1. Fold several sheets of paper in half so that you create a booklet.
2. Bind the pages of your book by punching holes along the left side and tying them together with ribbon or string, or unfold the booklet and staple along the fold.
3. Customize the journal by creating an illustration on the cover.

**Using the Journal:**
1. Write the day’s date.
2. Go outside and walk in your yard, along your street, or in a nearby park and take notice of what you see.
   - Did you see any animals? Birds? Insects?
   - Where are they living?
   - What are they doing?
   - How many are there?
   - What time of day is it?
3. Write down notes or sketch a picture in your journal, so that you have a record of the thing you saw.
4. After a few entries, take a look back at the things you saw. How were things different each time? What was the same?

**Materials**
- Several sheets of unlined paper
- Hole punch or stapler for binding
- Ribbon or string to bind
- Markers, pencils or crayons
Mathematics occurs in daily activities, routines, play and interactions with adults and other children. We often think it’s just about counting or adding or learning math facts, but by exploring the interesting ways math shapes the world around us, we can help our children begin to think like mathematicians and learn to love math.

HOW I GROW: MATHEMATICAL THINKING

Number Sense and Problem Solving

Number sense is the ability to understand what numbers mean, how they relate to one another and how they can be used in real-world situations which include counting, constructing sets of objects, understanding more/less/equal.

Patterns

Once you start looking for patterns, you will see them everywhere. There are patterns in colors, shapes, sounds, dances and even daily routines! Recognizing and creating patterns as well as ordering objects in a series, are skills that translate directly into algebraic thinking and set the stage for bigger math ideas.

Shapes

Learning about shapes supports an understanding of geometry and building shape vocabulary. This involves the ability to recognize, manipulate and compare 2D and 3D shapes common in the world around them.

Spatial Skills

Spatial reasoning connects math to the physical world and includes skills like reading maps, understanding symmetry and building 3D objects, as well as positional words that describe the world in relation to others.

Measurement

The world is filled with ways to measure: length, height, weight, capacity, money, temperature, and time to name just a few! Your child’s understanding of measurement begins with vocabulary development to describe amounts and sizes.
HELP ME GROW: CAREGIVER STRATEGIES

Math Talk
You can make any moment a math moment by using “math talk,” words and phrases to help your child develop their math knowledge.

Give Me 5 and Subitize
Subitizing is the ability to ‘see’ a small amount of objects and know how many there are without counting. Grab some dice from a household game. Let your child put 6 pieces of their favorite snack into a small bowl (mini marshmallows, cereal pieces, fruit pieces, etc.). Have your child roll a single die and ask “How many dots did you roll?” or “What do you see?” Encourage them to verbalize how they know, such as, “I see two and one more and that is three.” Then have your child count out that many snacks.

Money in My Pocket
Grab a handful of change and encourage your child to sort the coins by size and even order the money from smallest in size (not value) to largest or vice versa.

Popsicle Stick Shapes
Create different geometric shapes (square, rectangle, triangles, octagons and hexagons). Practice math vocabulary such as sides and corners (vertices) to compare shapes.

LET’S EXPLORE TOGETHER

WATCH

PEG + CAT

Sid the Science Kid

Jr. SQUAD

PLAY

The Cat in the Hat Builds That

Measure Up

Peg + Cat: Chicken Coop

Sid the Science Kid: Crystals Rule

Ruff Ruffman: Hamster Run
I Spy Peg

Peg is made up of lots of different shapes! Look at the drawing of Peg below and talk with your child about the shapes that make up Peg. Then, take the activity outside and look for things in the real world that have the same shapes as those that make up Peg!
Can you find the secret message? Solve the equations at the left and then insert the letter that matches the number using the Code Key at the bottom of the page. Once you’re done, you should have a secret message from PBS KIDS!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Solve it!</th>
<th>Letter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 + 4 = ___</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 _ = 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 + 1 = ___</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___ + 3 = 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___ + 4 = 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 – 2 = ___</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___ - 1 = 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 + 3 = ___</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 + ___ = 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 / 2 = ___</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___ + 1 = 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 x 4 = ___</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Code Key**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Y</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>U</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Science is the study of the natural world, both living and nonliving, through a process of inquiry that includes observation, prediction and experimentation leading to understanding/explanation. Adults can support a child’s scientific inquiry by exploring and finding answers together, accepting that explorations are often messy and encouraging the recording of observations.

**HOW I GROW: SCIENTIFIC INQUIRY**

### Investigation and Inquiry

Learning science through inquiry provides kids the opportunity to “think like scientists,” asking questions, exploring and reflecting upon what they discover. The use of simple tools such as magnifiers, balance scales, rulers and tweezers encourages kids to investigate objects more closely and make comparisons.

### Physical Science

Physical science is the study of characteristics and properties of energy and nonliving matter. Through simple experiments and play with everyday natural and recycled materials, children begin to learn about the properties of items in their environment.

### Life Science

Life science includes the exploration of the senses, of living and non-living things, plants and animals (including humans), their features, characteristics and classifications.

### Earth and Space

Included in Earth science are the exploration of air and water, sand and soil, day and night, and the seasons. For the youngest children, learning about Earth and Space is grounded in what children can experience with their senses, and their background knowledge and understanding of concepts of Life Science and Physical Science provide an important foundation for deeper understanding of the Earth and Space.

### Engineering and Technology

Engineering and Technology is the practice of design to find solutions to particular human problems (engineering) and the human-made tools, systems and processes created to fulfill human needs and wants (technology). Children are natural engineers. Their early design and building skills can be seen in their play as they use simple tools and a variety of materials to create and build block towers and sand castles.
HELP ME GROW: CAREGIVER STRATEGIES

Wacky Water

Explore the states of matter by observing what happens to ice. Place a piece of ice on your sidewalk. What happens to the ice after 1 minute? How about 5 minutes? How about 30 minutes? Use the camera on your phone to record your findings!

LET’S EXPLORE TOGETHER

WATCH

Sid the Science Kid: Weather Surprise
Ruff Ruffman: Dress That Rhino
Nature Cat’s Great Outdoors

PLAY

Wild Kratts: Creature Mobile
Elinor Wonders Why
Play and Learn Science
ACTIVITY

Make a Bird Feeder

1. Select a bird feeder base: Pinecones are a popular foundation for a bird feeder, but you may also use an empty paper towel roll or a stale piece of bread.

2. String it up: Run a wire, dental floss or cotton string through your bird feeder. Secure the two ends together to make a loop.

3. Make it sticky: Coat the base with peanut butter. If you know someone who has peanut allergies, use honey instead.

4. Add some goodies: Roll the feeder in raisins, cranberries, unsalted and unbuttered popcorn, sunflower seeds, shelled plain peanuts or mixed birdseed.

5. Hang it up: Place your bird feeder on a hook or on a tree branch outside your window. Discover which birds are popular in your neighborhood, research what they like to eat, and make a bird feeder for them.

6. Keep a wildlife journal: Record what kind of birds and other animals come to visit your feeder!

Find more games and activities at pbskids.org/naturecat

What You Need:

• Pinecone, empty paper towel roll or piece of stale bread
• Peanut butter or honey
• Your choice of the following:
  - Raisins
  - Cranberries
  - Plain popped popcorn
  - Sunflower seeds
  - Shelled plain peanuts
  - Mixed birdseed
• Safety scissors
• Wire, dental floss or cotton string
ACTIVITY

Sink or Float

Predict and discover what sinks or floats!
During a trip to the Buoyant Sea, Sally and Nick test what sinks or floats. They learn that materials and shapes matter. What do you think will float? Test out your predictions using items from around the house and the table below.

Instructions

1. With the help of an adult, gather ten small household items (rubber band, coin, pencil, sticker, etc.) and fill up a sink or bucket.

2. Predict whether the items will sink or float by sorting them into two piles.

3. Test your predictions in the water. Place each item under “Sink” or “Float” on the table. Were you surprised? Scientists often are!

To PREDICT is to say what you think will happen before you try it out.
I predict you will have a boat-load of fun predicting what sinks and floats!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sink</th>
<th>Float</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

pbskids.org/catinthehat

Find related games in the FREE app
The Cat in the Hat Builds That
Download is now!
Children’s experiences in social studies begin at birth, as we are social beings who innately interact with others. Part of developing kindergarten readiness includes an awareness of self, family, classroom and the local community with whom they have interactions.

**HOW I GROW: SOCIAL STUDIES**

**Individual Development and Identity**
Children begin to recognize and appreciate similarities and differences in people and understand the roles of the family.

**People, Places and Environments**
Growing interactions with others creates a geographical awareness of familiar places, allowing children to identify people and build understanding of family relationships.

**Technology and Our World**
Experiences with technology help build awareness as children learn how to interact and understand how technology affects life.

**Civic Ideals and Practices**
Developing an understanding of leadership and group rules become easier for children to understand and follow.
HELP ME GROW: CAREGIVER STRATEGIES

Long Ago and Today
Children love to hear stories about their family members as kids. Look through old photos to compare and contrast how everyday life has changed.

My Family Tree
Creating a family tree is a great way to learn about important relationships and how we are the same and different in many ways. To “build” your tree, use our child-friendly paint recipe (pg. 33) to make the leaves by stamping out your child’s handprints. Draw the trunk with a marker or crayon and don’t forget to “carve” your family name! Add pictures of your child and other family members and help them realize that family is something we all have in common, regardless of how our families look.

Places We Go
Your child is becoming more aware of the places they visit. Use your phone to take pictures of everyday outings. Print out the pictures and assist your child in creating a simple map of their favorite places.

LET’S EXPLORE TOGETHER

WATCH

Molly of Denali
Let’s Go Iowa!
Meet the Helpers
Xavier Riddle and the Secret Movie

PLAY

Daniel Tiger: Classroom Helpers
Arthur: Arthur’s Top 20
Plum Landing: Wild City Search

Games
Luna the moon and her friends visit countries all over the world! Use the legend below to color each flag. Then invent your own flag filled with pictures of your favorite things.

United States

Egypt

China

Create Your Own Flag!

Coloring Legend
1 - Blue
2 - Red
3 - Black
4 - Yellow
Dear Grown-Up, Please tell a story about when you were a kid. For example: a favorite memory, a family tradition or a school experience. Together, draw a picture to go with the story. With your permission, the child will share this story and drawing with the class.
Creative expression involves all five senses and supports many aspects of a child’s development. Artistic experiences provide opportunities for children to interpret feelings and ideas, manipulate tools and solve problems while respecting how others see the world.

**Visual Arts**

Creating visual art helps children build the ability to maintain focus for extended periods of time. This opportunity allows them to explore media tools (e.g., markers, paint, watercolors and clay) and places value in the process over the end product.

**Music**

Singing, chanting and rhyming support children in the creation and recognition of patterns as well as enhancing vocabulary and oral language development.

**Creative Movement and Dance**

Dancing and exploring the different ways their body can move further develops a child’s gross motor skills.

**Dramatic Play and Theatre**

Experiences in this area allow children to role-play the world around them and share ideas while developing language and vocabulary. Placing pictures and labels also create a print-rich environment and encourage writing.
HELP ME GROW: CAREGIVER STRATEGIES

Nature Walk Art

On your next walk around the block, encourage your child to collect interesting leaves, sticks, small rocks and other items. Use these items to create a nature collage and remember your special time together.

Marker Magic

Don’t throw your dry markers away! Soak each color marker in a small jar of warm water. Place each color in a different squirt bottle and now you have water colors to squirt paint!

Sock Puppets

Have you ever lost a sock? Use the extra sock to create a sock puppet and retell your favorite stories. Add wiggle eyes and some yarn hair and let the storytelling begin!

LET’S EXPLORE TOGETHER

WATCH

Pinkalicious: Pinka Perfect Band

Nature Cat: Nature Art Box

Sesame Street: 123

PLAY

Nature Cat: Nature Art Box

Splash & Bubbles: Sand Art Spectacular

Pinkalicious: Pinka Perfect Band

Games

PBS
ACTIVITY

Mischievous Monsters

Use socks, yarn, paper bags and other materials to create silly monsters.

TYPES OF CRAFT MONSTERS
Based on the materials you have available, decide on what kind of monster you want to make.

MATERIAL SUGGESTIONS
These are some fun materials to use, if available. Keep an eye out for anything else that is sticky, glittery, bendy or has fun patterns.

PUT IT ALL TOGETHER
There is no right or wrong way to create your monsters - play around with the materials you have and see what comes together! You may want to lay things out and plan your puppet before sewing, gluing, cutting and drawing.

SHOWTIME!
Turn your monsters into a band and make a music video. Pick a song everyone likes and practice performing with your monsters. When you are ready, use a phone to record a video of your monsters rocking out. Share the video with family and friends!
ACTIVITY

Accidental Art

Have one family member start a drawing. It can be anything—a design, pattern or picture of something. After a minute or two, pass it on to the next family member. Keep going until everyone has had a chance to add something. Congratulations! You’ve created “accidental art!”
**DIY Dough Recipe**

**Ingredients:**
- 1 cup of flour
- 1/4 cup of salt
- 1/2 cup of water
- 3 to 5 drops of food coloring

**Directions:**
1. Mix together the flour and the salt.
2. Mix together 1/2 cup of warm water with a few drops of food coloring.
3. Slowly pour the water into the flour mixture, stirring as you pour. Stir until combined, then knead with your hands until the flour is completely absorbed. If the dough is too sticky, add more flour until it doesn't stick at all. Store in plastic bag or airtight container.

---

**Discovery Bottles**

Discovery Bottles are a safe way to develop sensory experiences that stimulate your young child's senses: touch, movement, balance, sight and hearing. Sensory activities facilitate exploration and naturally encourage children to use scientific processes while they play, create, investigate and explore without the concern of putting objects in their mouth.

**How to Make Discovery Bottles**

**Materials:**
- clean plastic bottle with a well-fitting lid
- hot glue gun (for securing lid)
- a variety of interesting objects

Fill the plastic bottle with objects. Ask a parent to secure the lid with hot glue for safety. That's all it takes! Let your imagination run wild and recycle plastic bottles!

---

**Homemade Salt & Flour Paint Recipe**

**Ingredients:**
- 1/2 cup of flour
- 1/2 cup of salt
- 1/2 cup of water
- food coloring or liquid watercolor

**Directions:**
1. Blend flour with salt. Add water and mix until smooth.
2. To color, separate dough into three equal parts. Put each piece in a sandwich bag. Add a few drops of liquid watercolor or food coloring to each bag.
3. Squish the bags until the color is well blended. Add more water if you would like a thinner paint.

Optional: Cut a corner off the baggie and squeeze the paint mixture into your squeeze bottle.

---

**Apple Donuts**

Makes 3-4 Apple Donuts

**Ingredients:**
- 1 large apple
- 4 oz cream cheese or nut butter spread
- 2 oz sprinkles, fruit or nut toppings

**Directions:**
1. Ask an adult to cut a large apple into 1/2" rounds and cut out the cores.
2. Spread your cream cheese or nut butter on the apple rounds.
3. Dip your covered apples into sprinkles, nuts or fruits.
I Can Cards

I can draw a picture.

I can talk to a friend.

I can count to 10.

I can do some exercise.

I can take a drink.

I can look at a book.
I Can Cards

I can sing a song.

I can take deep breaths.

I can think happy thoughts.

I can ask to go for a walk.

I can ________________________.

I can ________________________.
Everyday Smart With PBS KIDS
Use the daily prompts with your child for every day inspiration on activities that help grow developmental skills.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MATH Smart</th>
<th>SOCIAL Smart</th>
<th>HOW I LEARN Smart</th>
<th>ART Smart</th>
<th>LITERACY Smart</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you have a collection of something like books or socks? Count them and then write the number. Draw your favorite one!</td>
<td>Pick out clothes for the next day. Talk about your choice.</td>
<td>Choose a new game on the PBS KIDS app or website and talk about it as you are playing!</td>
<td>Go on a nature walk and collect leaves. Create a design by gluing the leaves on a paper.</td>
<td>Watch a PBS KIDS show and talk about your favorite show. Draw what happened first, next and last.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCIENCE Smart</th>
<th>MATH Smart</th>
<th>LITERACY Smart</th>
<th>EMOTIONAL Smart</th>
<th>HOW I LEARN Smart</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In the morning, draw a picture of what you predict the weather will be like today. At bedtime, discuss your prediction.</td>
<td>Try sorting toys by color. How about sorting by size? What other things can you sort?</td>
<td>Write your name. Have a grown-up write the name of your favorite PBS KIDS show. Circle the letters you find in both names!</td>
<td>Practice tying your shoe.</td>
<td>How can you build a tower using paper cups?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOCIAL Smart</th>
<th>ART Smart</th>
<th>MATH Smart</th>
<th>SCIENCE Smart</th>
<th>LITERACY Smart</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Share a toy with a friend. Sing the Daniel Tiger song: “You can take a turn, and then I’ll get it back.”</td>
<td>Make up a song with your name and share it with your friends.</td>
<td>Use actions to create a pattern and have a grown-up follow along. Try: hop, clap, wink</td>
<td>Plant a seed. Draw a picture of what it looks like each day for 10 days.</td>
<td>Use describing words to talk about your snack. Apples are crunchy, sweet and hard.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BODY Smart</th>
<th>EMOTIONAL Smart</th>
<th>SCIENCE Smart</th>
<th>LITERACY Smart</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Look through the grocery ad and cut out pictures of healthy foods.</td>
<td>Look in a mirror and make a happy face. Ask your grownup to guess how you feel. Make other faces such as mad, tired, hurt, embarrassed and silly!</td>
<td>Draw a picture of the day sky and the night sky. Compare and contrast.</td>
<td>Write the letters in your name. Pick a letter and find things in your house that begin with that sound!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LITERACY Smart</th>
<th>SOCIAL Smart</th>
<th>MATH Smart</th>
<th>HOW I LEARN Smart</th>
<th>PEOPLE Smart</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Make up words that rhyme with PBS KIDS characters names. Try: Cat – hat Jet – net Kratt – bat</td>
<td>Give someone a compliment today. Sing the Daniel Tiger song: “Thank you for everything you do!”</td>
<td>While taking a walk, talk about what you see in front of, next to and behind the house. Draw a map.</td>
<td>Make a sock puppet and have a puppet show!</td>
<td>Draw a picture of each person in your family on a different paper. Place each paper around the dinner table and invite them to find their seat.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MATH Smart</th>
<th>PEOPLE Smart</th>
<th>LITERACY Smart</th>
<th>EMOTIONAL Smart</th>
<th>SCIENCE Smart</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Help set the table. Can you order the silverware from tallest to smallest?</td>
<td>Who are the helpers in your neighborhood? Draw a picture for the mail person or garbage collector to thank them.</td>
<td>Visit your public library and check out PBS KIDS books!</td>
<td>Sing the Daniel Tiger song: “Grown-ups come back!” It will help you feel better when it’s hard to leave your grownup.</td>
<td>Use scissors to cut a piece of paper into zigzags. See if you can put it all back together like a puzzle.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Watch PBS KIDS

On Iowa PBS .1
Weekdays: 6:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Saturdays: 6:30 a.m. - 8:00 a.m.
Sundays: 7:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

On Iowa PBS .2
Now available 24/7

On our website
Visit iowapbs.org/kids-tv for 24/7 stream!

For information about other carriers in your area, visit iowapbs.org
### PBS KIDS Learning Goals

#### SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL LEARNING
- **Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood** 2-4 Social & Emotional Learning
- **Sesame Street** 2-5 Social & Emotional Learning, Literacy, Math, Spanish
- **Calliou** 2-5 Social & Emotional Learning
- **Esme & Roy** 2-5 Social & Emotional Learning
- **Clifford the Big Red Dog** 3-5 Social & Emotional Learning
- **Mister Rogers Neighborhood** 3-6 Social & Emotional Learning
- **Arthur** 4-8 Social & Emotional Learning, Social Studies
- **Xavier Riddle and the Secret Museum** 5-8 Social & Emotional Learning

#### LITERACY
- **Super WHY!** 2-5 Literacy
- **WordWorld** 2-5 Literacy
- **Martha Speaks** 4-8 Literacy (Vocabulary Acquisition)
- **Molly of Denali** 4-8 Literacy (Informational Text)
- **WordGirl** 5-8 Literacy (Vocabulary Acquisition)

#### SOCIAL STUDIES, THE ARTS & MORE
- **Pinkalicious & Peterrific** 3-6 The Arts, Creative Expression
- **Let's Go Luna!** 4-7 Social Studies (World Cultures and Geography)
- **Kart Kingdom** 3-6 Systems Thinking
- **Oh Noah!** 4-8 Spanish, Cultural Awareness
- **Scribbles and Ink** 4-8 The Arts

#### STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Math)
- **Peep and the Big Wide World** 2-5 Science Inquiry, Life/Physical Science, Math 24/7 Channel
- **Splash and Bubbles** 2-5 Scientific Inquiry, Life Science
- **Peg + Cat** 3-5 Math
- **Curious George** 3-5 Scientific Inquiry, Engineering, Math
- **Elnor Wonders Why** 3-5 Scientific Inquiry, Life/Earth Science, Engineering & Technology
- **The Cat in the Hat Knows a Lot About That!** 3-6 Scientific Inquiry, Life/Earth/Physical Science, Engineering & Technology
- **Dinosaur Train** 3-6 Scientific Inquiry, Life/Earth Science
- **Sid the Science Kid** 3-6 Scientific Inquiry, Life/Earth/Physical Science, Math 24/7 Channel
- **Nature Cat** 3-7 Life/Earth Science
- **Wild Kratts** 4-8 Scientific Inquiry, Life Science
- **Cyberchase** 4-8 Math
- **Hero Elementary** 4-8 Scientific Inquiry, Life/Earth & Space/Physical Science, Engineering & Technology
- **Odd Squad** 5-8 Math
- **Ready Jet Go!** 5-8 Scientific Inquiry, Life/Earth & Space/Physical Science, Engineering & Technology

#### Digital-Only
- **The Ruff Ruffman Show** 4-8 Scientific Inquiry, Physical Science, Engineering & Technology
- **Design Squad Nation** 4-8 Scientific Inquiry, Physical Science, Engineering
- **PBS KIDS ScratchJr** 5-8 Computational Thinking
- **SciGirls** 6-8 Scientific Inquiry, Life/Physical Earth Science, Engineering & Technology, Math
RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES

PBS LearningMedia: www.pbslearningmedia.org
Access to thousands of free, innovative, standards-aligned digital resources.

PBS LearningMedia Ready to Learn Portal: www.pbslearningmedia.org/readytolearn/
Educational resources to promote early learning and school readiness in young children.

PBS Parents: www.pbsparents.org
Explore PBS parenting resources and expert advice on raising children, planning birthday parties and activities.

PBS KIDS/Learn: www.pbskids.org/learn
Portal for parents, caregivers and educators containing curriculum resources and activities.

PBS KIDS: www.pbskids.org
Educational videos and games from PBS KIDS Shows.

PBS KIDS APPS: www.pbskids.org/apps/
Search for PBS KIDS apps based on shows, skills or age.

PBS KIDS 24/7 Channel (check local listings)
24/7 Access to PBS KIDS educational programming.
My Back-to-School Checklist
(check boxes for each item below)

☐ I practiced my morning routine 3 times.
   I woke up, got dressed, washed up, brushed my teeth and ate my breakfast just like I’ll do on school days - three days in a row!

☐ I learned how to walk to school or to my bus stop.
   I know where my school or bus stop is, and who I’ll walk to school or wait at my bus stop with each morning. I also know how I’ll get home after school each day.

☐ I organized all my clothes!
   I know where I put all my clothes, including the clothes I wear to school each day. I also know where to put my clothes when they’re dirty.

☐ I know where I’ll put my backpack, books and school supplies each day.
   I have a special place to keep my school bag and books so I will always be able to find them when I need them.

☐ I’m healthy.
   I’ve visited my doctor for my back-to-school check-up. I know how tall I am and how much I weigh.

☐ I know what I’m having for lunch.
   I know how to order my lunch at school, or what I’ll bring in my lunchbox each day.

☐ My parents and I know who my teacher is.
   I know my teacher’s name, and my parents know how to contact my teacher if they have questions about how I’m doing in school.

☐ I know what I’m doing when I get home from school each day.
   My parents and I know what my afternoon schedule is. We know where I’ll be after school, when I can play with friends, when I need to do school work, when I’ll have dinner and when it’s bedtime.

Find more games and activities at pbskids.org
Use this calendar to write or draw the important things that are happening each day of your first week of school. Are you planning any special activities at school this week? Will you have any special lunches or activities at school this week?
Now that you have made it to the end of the On My Way to K toolkit, we leave you with a few more resources that are available to families in almost every community.

**Public Libraries**
Whether you are checking out free books or attending story time, public libraries are an excellent resource for families.

**2-1-1**
United Way’s 2-1-1 is a free service that connects individuals to critical health and social service resources when they need help the most. From help with a household bill, food assistance, or counseling for suicide prevention, United Way’s 2-1-1 help line is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

**Grocery Store**
It’s not just about food! Grocery stores hold so many learning opportunities for families, all in one place that you visit on a regular basis. Use your trip to the local grocery store as a learning opportunity. Count the number of items in your cart to build number sense skills. Look for shapes throughout the store to grow shape recognition. Read labels with your child to reinforce literacy skills.

**Parks**
Take your outdoor play to the next level by visiting your local park. Nurture science inquiry by exploring nature. Support social and emotional development by encouraging children to play with each other and take turns. Build gross motor skills through active play.

**Iowa PBS**
In addition to all the great television programming you know and love from PBS, Iowa PBS Education is engaging the community in many different ways. Events, teacher trainings, community partnerships and local productions are just a few of the ways you can interact with Iowa PBS Education.

**MeetTheHelpers.org**
Get to know more about helper careers like police officers, firefighters, doctors and others. Learn about how these helpers assist in emergency situations. Then, download activity sheets to help your family practice emergency preparedness.