

# The ABC's of School Readiness<sup>®</sup>

... an alphabetical action plan to help get children ready for school.



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The *ABC's of School Readiness* is designed to help get children ready for school and to become confident and competent learners. Using the alphabet as a framework, the *ABC's of School Readiness* highlights twenty-six important ideas that support children's development. It makes an innovative contribution to early childhood care and education by blending child development and policy issues and by providing an alphabetical action plan for school readiness.

The *ABC's of School Readiness* is a collaborative project of the New Haven Early Childhood Council, United Way of Greater New Haven's Success By 6® Initiative, the New Haven Free Public Library/Fair Haven Branch, the Fair Haven Community Health Center, WTNH News Channel 8, the Community Foundation for Greater New Haven, CT Voices for Children, and the Connecticut Children's Museum.

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## A ... is for ASK

“Did you know that some children enter kindergarten with a vocabulary of up to 30,000 words while others only have a vocabulary of 5,000 words?”

- Asking questions builds children's vocabulary.
- Asking questions helps children think.
- Asking questions helps children express themselves.

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## B ... is for BUILD

“Did you know that building with blocks is the beginning of your child's math education?”

- Building builds math skills.
- Building helps children learn to plan and solve problems.
- Building together builds friendships.

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## C ... is for CLIMB

“Did you know that children who challenge themselves by climbing are more confident students?”

- Climbing promotes coordination.
- Climbing builds confidence.
- Climbing grows healthy kids.

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## D ... is for DRAW

"Did you know that when children scribble this is their first lesson in writing?"

- Drawing helps children illustrate their ideas.
- Drawing helps children express their feelings.
- Drawing helps children get ready to write.

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## E ... is for EAT

"Did you know that children who eat well are healthier and better learners?"

- Children will eat a balanced diet if offered a variety of good foods.
- Good food is growing food.
- Eating together brings families together.

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## F ... is for FEELINGS

"Did you know that hugging helps children know how you feel about them?"

- Feelings are important.
- Talking about feelings helps children be empathetic towards others.
- Children don't always remember what adults say, but they always remember how adults make them feel.



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## G ... is for GRANDPARENTS

"Did you know that one in four grandparents are raising their grandchildren?"

- Grandparents are great teachers.
- Children depend on grandparents to care for them.
- Grandparents are the keepers of traditions.

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## H ... is for HEALTH

“Did you know that being healthy means a child is prepared to learn better?”

- Handwashing helps to keep children healthy.
- Every child needs a medical home.
- Schedule regular healthy child visits.

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## I ... is for IMMUNIZE

“Did you know that immunizing children can keep them from getting serious diseases?”

- Get *immunizations on time.*
- Schedule a complete set of *immunizations* so children are fully protected.
- Call your *primary health care provider, Health Department or clinic* for immunization information.

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## J ... is for JOKE

"Did you know that laughing helps children learn better?"

- Family jokes make children feel connected.
- Laughter is contagious.
- Laughter relieves stress and is healthy.

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## K ... is for KINDNESS

"Did you know that you can teach children to be kind?"

- Children who are treated kindly learn to treat others with kindness.
- Random acts of kindness count.
- Teach children to give to others.

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## L ... is for LIMITS

“Did you know that children need clear limits from loving adults to help them have strong internal limits?”

- Children need adults to set clear and predictable limits.
- Limits should be age appropriate.
- Limits help children learn right from wrong.

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## M ... is for MUSIC

“Did you know that learning music helps children think better?”

- Music builds vocabulary.
- Music teaches children patterns.
- Music adds melody and rhythm to life.

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## N ... is for NUMBERS

"Did you know that counting things every day helps children master their numbers?"

- Numbers are part of everyday life.
- Children need to practice counting real objects before writing numbers.
- Count things with children.



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## O ... is for OOPS

"Did you know that making mistakes provides opportunities for children to learn?"

- Everybody makes mistakes.
- Mistakes are learning experiences.
- Some of the world's greatest inventions started as mistakes.

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## P ... is for PUPPETS

“Did you know that playing with puppets provides practice at life skills needed for school success?”

- Puppets encourage communication.
- Puppets encourage children to explore different roles.
- Puppets encourage creative expression.

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## Q ... is for QUIET

"Did you know that having a quiet space for school work is important for school success?"

- Quiet time allows a child to concentrate.
- Quiet places help children relax.
- Quiet provides rest for the body and mind.

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## R ... is for READ

"Did you know that reading to your child for 15 minutes every day helps create a reader?"

- Reading provides new information about the world.
- Readers have been read to as a child.
- Reading is an important tool for life.

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## S ... is for SLEEP

"Did you know that best preparation for learning each day is a good night's sleep?"

- Children need sleep to grow.
- Rested children do better in school.
- Regular bedtime routines help children sleep.

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## T ... is for TEETH

"Did you know that tooth decay is the most common disease of childhood?"

- Teeth need a check-up every six months.
- Beautiful teeth can boost a child's self-confidence.
- Smiling children who are pain-free are able to learn better.

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## U ... is for UPSIDE DOWN

"Did you know that children can be taught to think creatively?"

- Children with strong imaginations can think of new ways to solve problems.
- Children learn by trying things out and experimenting.
- Changing perspective may help solve a problem.

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## V ... is for VOICE

“Did you know that we can be the voice of children in making changes?”

- Listen to children as they voice their dreams and aspirations.
- Listen to children as they voice their troubles.
- Use your voice to get involved to make changes for children.



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## W ... is for WATER

“Did you know that playing with water is your child's first science lesson?”

- Water play teaches scientific concepts.
- Water encourages exploration.
- Water is soothing to children.

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## X ... is for XYLOPHONE

“Did you know that rhythm is the key to language development and reading?”

- Children can make beautiful rhythms on xylophones.
- Keeping the beat with finger and toe tapping helps children learn the rhythm of language.
- Xylophones help teach sequencing and order.

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## Y ... is for YES

"Did you know that saying yes helps children grow into self-reliant and self-sufficient people?"

- Use redirection as discipline.
- Encourage children to make choices and follow through.
- Children with strong self-images succeed.

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## Z ... is for ZIPPER

“Did you know that children with strong self-help skills are confident and competent learners?”

- Children are capable.
- Mastering new tasks builds self-confidence.
- Provide children with self-help opportunities.
- Developing skills takes time and patience.

Notes

# ABC's contact people

We thank Marga Varea and Kica Matos for their work in translating the *ABC's of School Readiness* into Spanish.