

Helping Your Child Build School Success Skills

Young children are explorers and scientists as they try to figure out how the world works. Adults can help them by encouraging them as they attempt to put things together or take them apart, as they ask questions about how something works or why something happens.

The New Mexico Early Learning Outcomes include several school-success building skills. Our goal for each child is that he or she:

- Try new things or activities
- Learn to do things on his or her own
- Pretend in many ways
- Develop a longer attention span

In addition, developing responsibilities for the greater community are important school skills. The New Mexico PreK goals in this area for each child are that he or she:

- Express cultural influences from home, neighborhood and community
- Learn to care for belongings
- Play with other children
- And learn to resolve conflicts



The following activities can help support your child's development of the skills that will help toward school success:

Take Cues from Your Child - Paying Attention

Young children will pay attention to activities that interest them. They will quickly move on to something else if they are not interested. Take your cues from your child.

If he or she is really enjoying coloring on scrap paper with markers or crayons, allow him or her to continue to do so. You could add some other ideas and materials to help him or her pay attention even longer. Write his or her name on the paper and talk about the letters you see and the sounds that they make. Draw some shapes on your paper (a circle, a triangle, a square) and talk about the shapes. "This one is round. This one has three corners. How many corners does this one have?" Talk about the colors your child is using. Don't worry about what he or she is drawing or scribbling. Being able to actually draw real objects is something many children do not develop until four or five years of age.

If you are reading a story to your child and they are not interested, stop the story and do something else. Look around the room for things that are blue or red. Find a ball to roll back and forth to each other. Set up a bucket outside and fill it half-way with water. Then, give your child some measuring spoons and cups to play with in the water. Find an activity that your child WILL pay attention to and know that you can read that story another day.