



NC SEEDLING



Study to
Explore
Early
Development

North Carolina
SEED

School Readiness: Encouraging Thinking Skills

As your child grows, you will see a big jump in her thinking skills. She may be able to come up with solutions to more complex problems. This is an amazing time when your toddler's skills and personality continue to deepen and grow.

What can you do to support your child's thinking skills and promote school readiness?

·Encourage pretend play. This helps her develop her own ideas. It also strengthens her thinking skills as she uses logic in her play: The dog has to go back in his house because it's raining. You can help her develop her ideas by asking questions: *What is the doggy feeling? Why? What might happen next?*

·Offer materials that help your child act out the stories he's creating: Hats, dress-up clothing, toy dishes, cardboard boxes, blankets, pillows, etc.

·As you go through your day, ask your child questions about what the two of you are seeing: *Why do you think the leaves fall from the trees? Where do you think the butterfly is going?* This lets her know that you are interested in her ideas.

·Offer lots of chances to explore in creative ways. Take nature walks. Play with sand and water. Give your child objects she can take apart and investigate. By exploring objects during play, children figure out how things work and develop problem solving skills.

·Use every day routines to notice patterns. Using language to explain these patterns helps your child become a logical thinker and increases her vocabulary "When the buzzer rings, the clothes are dry."

·Sort and categorize through the day. Your child can separate laundry into piles of socks, shirts, and pants. He can help set the table and organize the forks, plates and spoons. At clean-up time,

have him put the cars on one shelf and books on another.

·Talk about feelings. This helps your child understand and cope with her emotions. Talk about what others might be feeling: *That little girl is jumping and smiling, how do you think she feels?*

·Encourage your child to try different solutions to problems, rather than doing it for him. You might suggest he try the square block in another hole in his shape sorter, or add some blocks to the bottom of his tower to keep it from collapsing.

(From "Zero to Three": <http://www.zerotothree.org/child-development/school-readiness/pdf/thinking-skills-from-24-to-36-months.pdf>)

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www.NCSEED.org

NOTES

- NC SEED is finished enrolling families
- SEED will finish collecting data from families this winter

