

LEARNING THROUGH PLAY



Dear Families,

Kindergarten is an exciting year for children and their families. Each day is filled with new learning experiences and opportunities. The everyday moments you spend engaging with your child in fun learning experiences builds their confidence, curiosity and interest in the world around them.

The *Welcome to Kindergarten*[™] newsletter is designed to support families with playful learning suggestions they may wish to explore at home. Inside this issue, you will find activity ideas that fit naturally into family life and encourage children to actively engage in making meaning, taking risks and trying out new ideas. The activities focus on areas such as literacy, mathematics, physical activity, social and emotional learning, and more.

We invite you to use the WTK newsletter ideas and suggestions to enrich your child's learning opportunities throughout their kindergarten year.

Warm regards,
From the WTK Team

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Sound Sort



Gather some familiar items from around your home. (eg., a toy car, a doll, a spoon, a block).



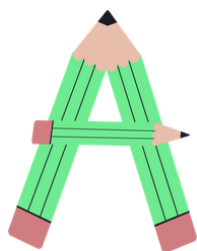
Encourage your child to say the name of the item and think about the sound they hear at the beginning (eg., block starts with b, car starts with c).



Help your child by modelling how to say each word and practicing with them.



Using letters, encourage your child to match the letter that goes with the item.



Play "I Spy"

Focusing on the beginning sound, such as "I spy with my little eye something that starts with the /m/ sound".

Try this with different objects indoors and outdoors and see how many sounds your child can identify.





Count & Move



Looking for a quick, playful activity that gets little bodies moving and little brains growing? **Count & Move** is a favourite and a great way to blend physical play with early numeracy.

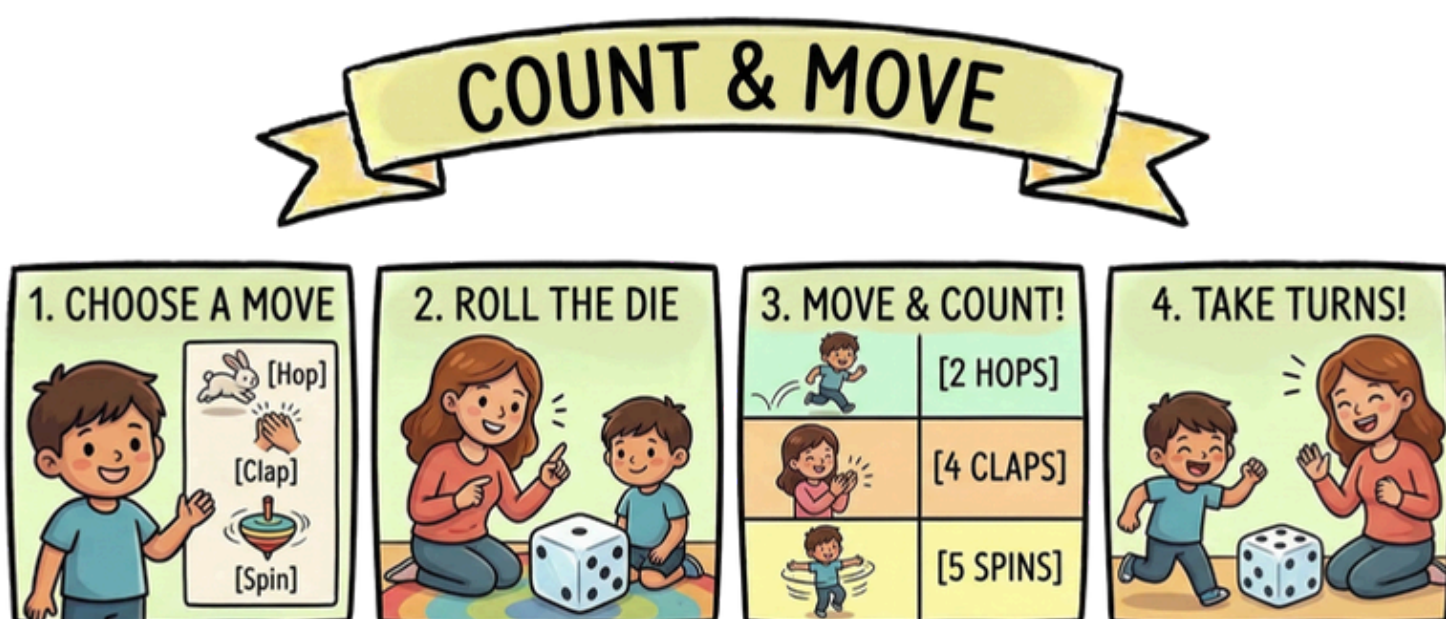
What to Do:

Invite your child to choose a movement.
(hopping, clapping, spinning, or anything they love).

Roll a die together and look at the number.
Your child may recognize it or count the dots.

Do the movement that many times
(2 hops, 4 claps, 5 spins).

Take turns so your child sees you model counting and moving too.



Variation:

Instead of a die, put number magnets or number cards in a hat and let your child pull one out. Great practice for identifying the numeral!

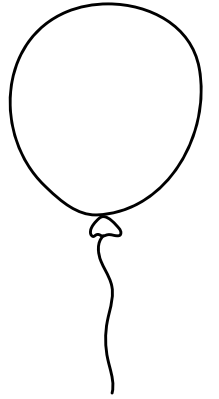
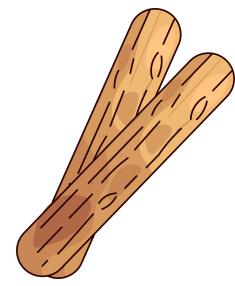
Balloon Tennis



A fun **indoor game** to build motor skills, eye-hand coordination and work off some energy!

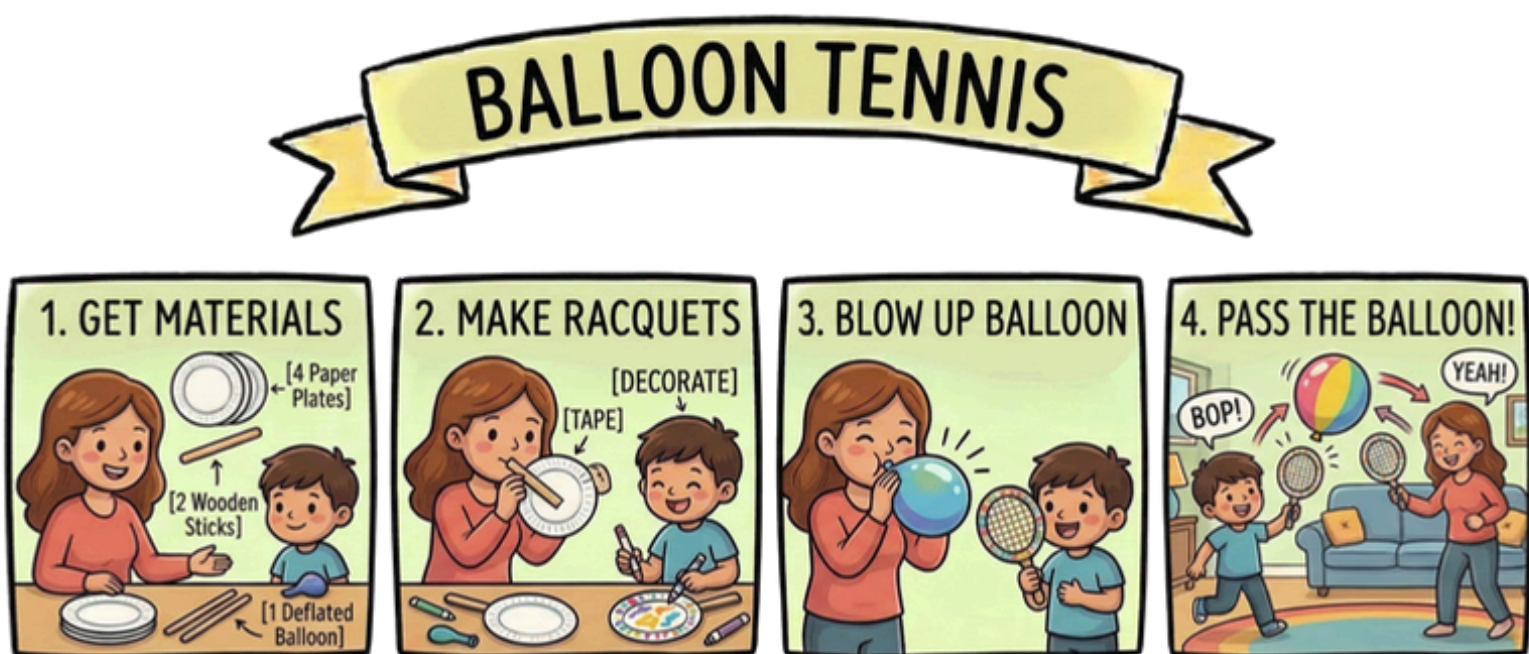
Materials Needed:

- 4 Paper plates
- 2 Wooden sticks (e.g., paint stir stick)
- 1 Balloon



How to get started:

- Tape or glue the wooden stick to the back of a paper plate. (You and your child may want to decorate the paper plate).
- Blow up the balloon to the desired size.
- Now the fun begins!
- Using your paper plate racquet pass the balloon back and forth with your child.



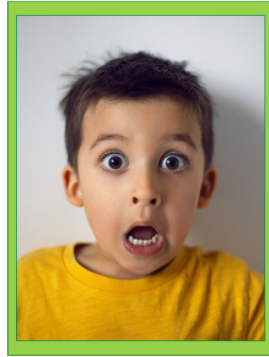
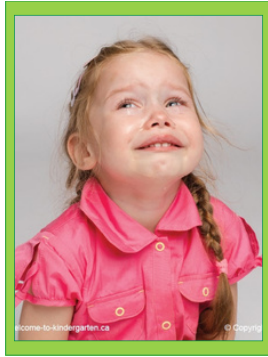
Variation:

Tie a string between two chairs to create a "tennis net". You and your child stand on opposite sides and try to get the balloon over the string.

Tip - If your child is not able to direct the balloon quite yet, they can just practice keeping the balloon up in the air.

Exploring Feelings Together

Children learn to manage their emotions by first learning to recognize what they are feeling, to name their feelings and to practice calming strategies.



FACE STORY

Our faces and bodies tell a story about how we are feeling.

- Look at the facial expressions in each photo and guess what emotion each child is feeling (e.g., happy, sad, angry/mad, surprised, worried or tired/sleepy).
- How do you know? (Is it their mouth or is it their eyes?)
- Encourage your child to tell about a time when they felt some of those emotions.
- Invite your child to tell a story about what might be happening in some of the photos.
- Talk about ways to calm yourself when angry, mad, worried or scared. (e.g., take deep breaths, ask a trusted adult for a hug, count to 10, find a safe space, play quietly with a favourite toy, listen to calm music).



Tip:

Using your home language to talk about feelings helps your child understand and label their emotions.

Sink or Float?

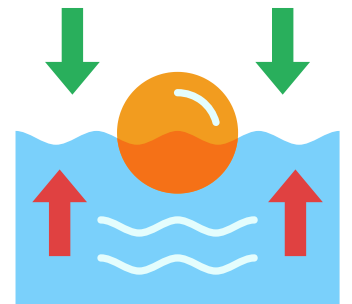
A Simple Science Activity



What to do:

Fill a bowl or sink with water and gather a few household items that are able to get wet. Invite your child to guess whether each object will sink or float before dropping it into the water. After each test, chat together about what happened and why.

Does it matter if the items are dropped or placed in the water? **Why?**
Are there objects that sink at first and then slowly float to the top?



Challenge your child

Give your child tin foil and challenge them to make a boat that floats. How many items can it hold before sinking?

About us

Welcome to Kindergarten™

- ◆ Supports new Kindergarten children and families, in warmly welcoming them to school.
- ◆ Offers high quality early learning materials and family support.
- ◆ All *Welcome to Kindergarten™* activities and resources are based on current research and effective practice in early learning, transition to school, family engagement and community involvement.

Read with your child every day.

It's one of the best and most enjoyable ways to help them learn.



Children love hearing the same stories again and again—that's how they learn and build confidence. You can read in your first language—this strongly supports your child's learning and development.

Make reading cozy. Sit close, cuddle, and enjoy the story. Choose books your child likes. Talk about the pictures and ask simple questions. Even if your child doesn't answer right away, keep talking—you'll soon see them join in.