



Fit für die Schule



**Fit für die Schule
Was kleine Kinder von
ihren Eltern brauchen**

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Dear parents

If your child is between two and six years of age, you've probably sometimes asked yourself how to arouse its curiosity and make it ready for life, for kindergarten and school.

In our society, school is an extremely important, richly stimulating source of development for all children. It is a right, but also an obligation for all children to attend school. Organized learning in a classroom will come easier to your child if it has been prepared early enough.

As parents you have considerable influence on your child and is the time to do something for it! From our experience as experts in child psychology we strongly recommend the following suggestions:

Children need:

Security,

safe ties to and constant, loving relationships in your family;

Experiences,

stimulating experiences and everyday tasks which they can participate in from an early age and can prove themselves;

Relationships,

a social environment with other children and adults which permits them to become self confident and considerate.

Children need language

Language opens doors to others and to learning. It is conveyed to the child right from the earliest years. Children forge relationships through language. They learn how to speak with other children and with adults. They also learn how to resolve conflicts through language.

Language must be acquired and nurtured. Children love playing with language. They experiment with sound and tones, discover how to make funny words with meaningless syllables, test the meaning of words or occasionally use «bad words» to see what the impact is on adults.

Children are supervised and guided by the language their parents use. Children learn to listen, obey and express themselves. The rules for living together are verbally determined. The spoken word must be heard and understood. In other words, what someone says, goes.

Language is a great treasure that you give your children to take through life.



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Acquiring and nurturing language

Speaking

Speak a lot with your child, even if it is still young and cannot yet speak. Many infants understand anyway. They imitate the melody in the speech and reply in their way. It is the beginning of conversation. There's more to speaking together

than just conveying information.

Make sure to speak with your child calmly and clearly understood words; avoid crude curses and insults.

Speaking cannot be learned by watching television. Too much television and time spent at the computer damage language abilities.

Listening

Listen attentively when your child speaks. Take the time to listen. When you explain something to your children, make sure they hear and understand you.

Story telling

When you tell your children stories, look at picture books with them, sing

songs with them and recite verses, you awaken in them the joy of language and you nurture the relationship.



Completing tasks, putting off demands

Developing good habits

The everyday life of a family is governed by certain things some of which have to be done right away without any back talk. They include washing hands before meals, getting dressed to go shopping, or stopping an exciting game to get ready for bed.

Helping out

From early on give your children small tasks which they can do together with you. And make sure you give them support and praise. They need it. Over time, they will be able to do their little chores on their own: helping set the table, tidying up, doing small chores.

Waiting

Children have only a few needs and desires which have to be satisfied immediately. They all must learn to wait: to continue listening when others have not finished speaking, not to eat until it's time, to watch television when there's a programme worth watching. All this is very important for children to learn, even when they don't like it.



Trying hard

Learning frequently requires a big effort. It can take a long time. Some learning must be seen through to the end. If need be, help your children with this. Let them occasionally grit their teeth and see the effort through to the end. For a child to learn that it was successfully able to see something through is an important experience

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Give support. Say no!

Saying no

Show your children that there are limits. In doing so, you are giving them security, direction and support. Your children need rules that keep order in the family unit. Saying no doesn't hurt. Rather it is further proof of the love of the parents. You can't fulfil every wish. For example don't give in to your child in the department store even if it rolls around on the floor screaming. Your children will find it much easier later in life if they have learned early enough to do without something and to overcome disappointment.

How do I speak to my child?

Words alone often aren't enough. Instruct your children with clear, understandable requests and actions that let it accept and implement the rules. Go down to the child's eye level if you want to give it an order or quietly tell it no. You can gently stroke the child when you are speaking with it so that it understands more clearly that it is being addressed and it should take what you are telling it seriously. Physical punishment and frightening threats, such as the withdrawal of love, hurt the relationship between children and their parents and are by no means called for.



Have confidence in the abilities of your children! Challenges build character!

Children learn through their own experiences. But they also need the confidence of their parents and the opportunities to try new things and make mistakes. Overprotection and exaggerated concern make children insecure and take away their self-confidence. Every child can do a lot if it feels well in itself and is secure in the situation.

Participate, play and rest

- Provide the necessary environment for the child's activity and play such as an undisturbed area that is safe and where intentional damage and mutual torment can be avoided.
- Your child is creative. It tries things out and as it does, it learns. Don't interfere in your children's play except when it goes too far or when you are asked.
- Sometimes children become bored. Leave them alone. You don't always have to provide diversions.
- Every child, even if it has brothers and sisters, should have time to itself every day to get a bit of peace and quiet. Not everything it does has to be action and fun.
- Devote yourself completely to playing with your children once every half day. More is not necessary. In the remaining time you can involve the children in your activities: vacuuming, cooking, shopping. The child should adjust to you and not vice versa!



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Playing in the children's group

I and you

Play with other children is extremely important for healthy social development. In regular play periods with other children of the same age, your child tests its impact on others. It practices listening to its playmates, joining in or standing back. It is possible even for small children to form first friendships.

Rage, disappointment and reconciliation

When children play together differences of opinion crop up. Small children often do not see any other way to do something than their own and very quickly feel despair, helplessness or rage. Most of the time, children can sort things out for themselves and soon begin playing again. By your presence you give your child a sense of security and support. Comfort your child, help it get over its anger and give it new encouragement.

Once me, then once you

Children learn from each other what it means to be the stronger or the weaker in the group at various times; to give orders or to have to obey orders; to be successful or unsuccessful in the group. Your child should also learn to say "sorry" if he's responsible for an accident

Your children confront various situations and meet various people. Show them that they can play with many of them and respect them all.



Adults are role models

Being parents involves teaching, showing, encouraging and setting examples. Your children watch you closely in everyday life. They hear you exactly and copy you. They watch and imitate you inasmuch as they are able. In the first years of their lives, children learn nearly everything that is most important throughout their whole lives. They simply live according to the examples set by the closest and most caring people in their lives.

For example, they learn to greet each other in the morning just after waking and to say «Good night» in the evening before going to sleep. They learn how to have fun with each other, how to argue and how to make peace again. They learn when to be happy and when to be sad. They learn what humour is and what being serious is. They learn how to deal with good and bad feelings and what makes a person happy. Good role models give children a feeling of security and a good measure of self-confidence.

Enjoy the brief time when your children need you so much and can learn so much from you.

We hope you get much pleasure from your children.
Canton of Bern child counselling offices
www.erz.be.ch/fit-fuer-die-schule

