

LEARNING TO GROW

CENTER ON THE FAMILY ♥ UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

Self-Directed Learner

Raising A School-Ready Child

As parents, guardians, and/or child care providers, you have a powerful influence on children's learning. Children's love of learning begins at home. Your active involvement in providing positive early learning experiences gives them a solid base to build on when they enter school. It also makes an important contribution toward creating strong, positive home and school partnerships that help children succeed in school.

Each month, *Raising a School-Ready Child* will provide you with ideas on how to engage young children, especially 3-and 4-year olds, in everyday activities that help them develop the characteristics, positive behaviors, and skills that lead to success at home, school, work, and in life. These activities will be linked to one of the six General Learner Outcomes (GLOs) identified and used by Hawaii's Department of Education to evaluate students' performance in all grade levels and all academic disciplines.

This month's readiness activities focus on GLO #1:

Self-Directed Learners have the ability to be responsible for their own learning.

When you give children age-appropriate responsibilities and teach them how to carry out these responsibilities, you help them learn to:

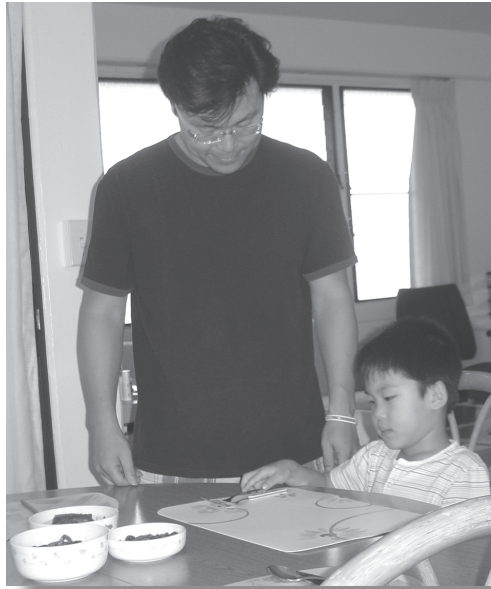
- ♥ follow directions,
- ♥ finish things that they start,
- ♥ develop confidence in their abilities, and
- ♥ practice working cooperatively with others.

These are important readiness skills that will help children be ***self-directed learners*** in school. In kindergarten, they will be expected to:

- ♥ work independently and ask for help when needed,
- ♥ organize workplace and materials,
- ♥ make productive use of class time, and
- ♥ set goals.



See the back of this sheet for suggestions of activities you can do with young children. As you involve them in these types of activities, you give children the practice and encouragement they need to become ***self-directed learners***. In addition, you help them develop their physical, social-emotional, language, and cognitive skills.



I Can Help*

WHAT YOU NEED:

- ♥ Cups
- ♥ Forks or chopsticks
- ♥ Plates
- ♥ Napkins

WHAT TO DO:

1. Have the child help set the table for mealtime.
2. Set one place setting at the table as an example for him to follow. Explain that each person needs one plate, one napkin, one cup, and one fork or set of chopsticks.
3. Have him count the number of cups, plates, forks or chopsticks, and napkins needed.
4. Ask him to place these items in the appropriate places, reminding him to use your place setting as an example.
5. Talk with the child about each family member and the tableware. For example, ask, "Is Daddy's cup the same size as yours? Which one is bigger?"
6. Discuss the importance of helping others.

*Adapted from Learning to Grow Early Learning Activities for Young Preschoolers, produced by the University of Hawaii at Manoa Center on the Family.

Other Activities

1. **Responsibilities:** Give children age-appropriate responsibilities to do regularly, e.g. put away toys, brush teeth, sort the laundry, help to wash the car.
2. **Checklist:** Create a checklist of responsibilities and let them check off each as it's completed.
3. **Time Limits:** Provide time limits for certain activities; show children how to monitor the time with clocks, watches, or timers.
4. **Tie Shoes:** Teach children how to tie or fasten their shoes. Encourage them to do it themselves and allow them lots of time to practice.
5. **Name Game:** Help children to memorize their name, parents' names, and phone number. Make up a game, song, or rhyme to help them remember the information.

These types of activities also help children:

- ♥ Develop eye-hand coordination (Physical Development)
- ♥ Learn to cooperate with others (Social and Emotional Development)
- ♥ Increase their observational, listening and understanding skills, and attention span (Language and Literacy Development)
- ♥ Recognize math concepts like numbers, sizes, shapes, sequences, volume, measurement, and time (Cognitive Development)*

IMPORTANT REMINDER

The knowledge and skills children learn at an earlier age provide the foundation for more complex learning as they get older. To encourage children's love of learning:

- ♥ focus on having fun rather than improving specific skills
- ♥ follow their interests; select activities they enjoy
- ♥ adapt activities to match their capabilities, making them more challenging as children mature.