

School readiness programme information

School Readiness Program

The School Readiness program is a parenting program designed to promote children's school readiness. This program is a supplemental to the early years Parent Program. The ultimate outcomes are to improve children's school readiness, and to prevent children from developing conduct problems and academic underachievement in later school years.

The programme is run over 4-5 sessions (2 hourly)

Sessions 1 & 2: Child-directed Play: Strengthening Children's Social, Emotional and Cognitive Skills

The purpose of this multimedia program is to teach parents and other adults child directed play skills that promote children's social, emotional and academic school readiness skills. The skills demonstrated by parents in this videotape show how parents can encourage their children's development of important peer friendship skills, such as being cooperative, sharing and helping friends, waiting, and taking turns. In addition, the program shows how parents can promote their children's language and emotion regulation skills by building emotion vocabulary and strengthening their understanding and expression of feelings. Finally, parents demonstrate how to encourage their children's academic school readiness by promoting, not only their understanding of numbers, colours, and shapes, but also by expanding their attention span and building their self-confidence in their abilities.

Key Concepts:

- Value of parents giving attention and coaching children's friendly play and social skills with other children
- How to do emotion coaching to build emotional expression
- Building children's self-esteem and creativity through child-directed play concepts
- Helping children learn to problem solve and sustain their attention on a focused, cooperative activity
- The modelling principle by parents avoiding the use of critical statements and demands and substituting positive polite language, children learn more positive communication

- Building children's language skills through descriptive commenting strategies

Sessions 3&4 : Encouraging Social, Emotional, Academic and Problem Solving Skills through Interactive Reading

The purpose of this multimedia program is to teach parents and other adults how to promote interactive reading with children in the early school years. Children's reading and language skills are best fostered through an approach that invites children to interact with the story and to be actively engaged in the process of talking about the stories and the pictures in the book. This child-directed, interactive approach with children increases children's confidence in their pre-reading skills, promotes their imagination and creativity in storytelling, and helps children understand the association between the printed word and verbal language. Parents' reading interactively with children also increases children's interest in books, expands their expressive and descriptive language skills, and stimulates their curiosity and love for learning. Interactive reading may seem like such an easy and straightforward task that many parents may overlook the importance of developing good reading skills. These skills, however, are some of the most important of all for laying the foundation for children's success at school. This program examines some of the ways adults can foster children's reading and language skills while at the same time promoting problem solving and social-emotional understanding.

Key Concepts:

- Providing positive support for children's reading skills.
- Helping children develop imaginative and creative story telling through interactive approaches.
- Building children's self-esteem and self-confidence in their reading ability.
- Making reading enjoyable through interactive reading and letting the child be the storyteller.
- Using the Reading With CARE building blocks:

C - A - R - E

Commenting and describing pictures

Asking open-ended questions, such as predicting; what comes next?

Responding with encouragement and praise to children's efforts

Expanding on what the child says

Feedback from Parents who completed the course in Essex

- 1) The parents stated that they were implementing all the session elements into practice in the home
- 2) They stated the elements they struggled most with were;
 - Play
 - Praise
 - Emotional coaching
- 3) The best parts were;
 - Being in an atmosphere within the group that was both reassuring and informative
 - Was able to absorb the information
 - Discussions
- 4) Parents stated that attending the programme made the transition to school easier for themselves as parents
- 5) Parents stated that attending the programme made the transition to school easier for their child
- 6) All would recommend to a friend
- 7) They described the course as;
 - Relaxed
 - Friendly
 - really informative
 - reassuring
 - “getting things easier with the children”
 - was an easier way of your child to start school

All would be interested in more information on a longer parenting course