

# Womb to Classroom

*A Parent Guide to What Matters Most in the First Five Years*

Your child's learning begins before birth and grows rapidly in the first five years of life. These early years are when the brain develops the foundation for language, learning, behavior, relationships, and emotional health. The good news is that parents do not need complicated tools or expensive programs. What matters most are simple, loving, everyday interactions.

## Why These Early Years Matter

- The first 1,000 days—from pregnancy to age 2—are especially important for brain development.
- By age 5, much of the brain foundation for learning is already in place.
- Early experiences help shape language, emotional security, social skills, and readiness for school.
- Children grow best when they have good nutrition, loving relationships, safe environments, and chances to explore and learn.

## The 4 Most Important Things Parents Can Do

<b>READ</b> Read to your child every day, even for 10–20 minutes. Reading builds language, attention, bonding, and early literacy.	<b>TALK</b> Talk with your child often. Babies and young children build their brains by hearing words, conversation, and encouragement.
<b>PLAY</b> Play is how young children learn. Playing alone, with others, inside, and outside helps build thinking, movement, creativity, and confidence.	<b>NURTURE</b> Children need love, touch, safety, routines, healthy food, and responsive care. Feeling secure helps children learn and grow.

## What School Readiness Really Means

School readiness is not just knowing letters and numbers. It also includes being able to:

- listen and communicate
- manage emotions
- follow simple routines
- interact with other children and adults
- move, explore, and solve problems

## Bottom Line for Parents

**Small daily actions make a big difference.**

If you read, talk, play, and nurture your child consistently, you are helping build the foundation for success in school and in life.

**Parents matter most. Everyday moments are building your child's future.**

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