

St. Dominic Catholic Elementary School

Parent Resource Book



Developed for you by the St. Dominic Parent Advisory Council

September 2010

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Introduction

Welcome to St. Dominic School. We hope this booklet provides you and your family with valuable information which will help with your child's educational experience.

Handy School Information

School Address:

515 Hartsdale Avenue, Mississauga L5G 2G7

Telephone: 905.278.9821

Start Time	8:30 am
First Recess	10:30 am
Lunch	11:30 am – 12:30 pm
Second Recess	2:00 pm
School Finishes	3:00 pm

Reporting Absenteeism

If your child is ill, you'll need to call the school at 905.278.9821 and leave a message on the answering machine to inform the school. If your child is away and no message is left, the school will call you to inform you of an absence. This is a safety check.

Our Parent Reference Resource Centre

We encourage you to visit our newly created Parent Resource Centre which houses excellent reference books that deal with many issues related to parenting. This reference centre is located in the office. The resource centre was established through a grant from the Ministry of Education in 2010.

On the next page is a list of the parent books available for sign out:

Kids are Worth It! Raising Resilient, Responsible, Compassionate Kids. Barbara Coloroso

How to Talk So Kids Will Listen & Listen So Kids Will Talk. Adele Faber & Elaine Mazlish

Dealing With Disappointment: Helping Kids Cope When Things Don't Go Their Way. Elizabeth Crary

The Incredible Years: A Trouble-Shooting Guide for Parents of Children Aged 2-8 years. Carolyn Webster-Stratton

Siblings Without Rivalry: How to Help Your Children Live Together So You Can Live Too. Adele Faber & Elaine Mazlish

How to Get Your Child to Eat...But not Too Much: From Birth to Adolescence. Ellyn Satter

Keys to Helping Children Deal With Death and Grief. Joy Johnson

Teen Brain Teen Mind: What Parents Need to Know to Survive the Adolescent Years. Dr. Ron Clavier

Get Out of My Life, But First Could You Drive Me and Cheryl to the Mall? : A Parent's Guide to the New Teenager. Anthony E. Wolf

"I'm, Like, So Fat!": Helping Your Teen Make Healthy Choices About Eating and Exercise in a Weight-Obsessed World. Dianne Neumark-Sztainer

Overcoming School Anxiety: How to Help Your Child Deal with Separation, Tests, Homework, Bullies, Math Phobia, and other Worries. Diane Peters Mayer

The Bully, The Bullied, and the Bystander: From Pre-school to High School-How Parents and Teachers Can Help Break the Cycle of Violence. Barbara Coloroso

How Can My Kid Succeed in School? What Parents and Teachers Can Do to Conquer Learning Problems. Craig Pohlman

The Gift of ADHD: How to Transform Your Child's Problems into Strengths. Lara Honos-Webb

Reading Magic: Why reading Aloud to Our Children Will Change Their Lives Forever. Mem Fox

Helping Your Child to Read. Dee Reid and Diana Bentley

“Positive Discipline for Single Parents: Nurturing Cooperation, Respect, and Joy in Your Single-Parent Family.” Jane Nelsen et al

Mom’s House, Dad’s House: Making Two Homes for Your Child. A Complete Guide for Parents Who Are Separated, Divorced, or Remarried. Isolina Ricci

School History

The founding of St. Dominic's predates our addition to the Dufferin Peel Separate School Board. Separate School Section #7 of the Township of Toronto (Lakeview) originally purchased our land from Bonek Houses Ltd. and Rotman Building Company Ltd. The St. Dominic site was purchased for \$19,000 in 1954 and was built for \$89,000. St. Dominic opened its doors in September 1955 with Rita Dupuis as principal.

St. Dominic was originally named Queen of Heaven after our Blessed Mother but was changed to St. Dominic with the building of St. Dominic Church.

In fact, the first St. Dominic parish Mass was celebrated in our very library in 1955 by our founding Dominican Pastor Father Charbonneau along with Fr. Robert and Fr. Drouin. St. Dominic School was the site for parish masses until the first celebration at St. Dominic Roman Catholic Church on Christmas 1957.

The Lakeview area experienced tremendous growth during this early time period and construction for a second school, Queen of Heaven commenced in early 1960. By September 1960 the two schools had a combined staff of fifteen teachers. Over the next several years, additional construction occurred, expanding St. Dominic.

In 1966, St. Dominic school board joined the Dufferin Peel family of schools. In 2009, St. Dominic School welcomed students from St. James Elementary School as they merged to become one school at the St. Dominic site.



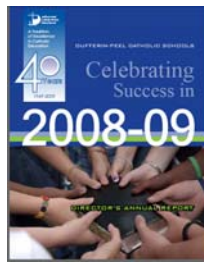
John Kostoff
Director of Education
Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board

Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board

Our Community of Schools

The Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board is one of the largest and most diverse school districts in Ontario, with 1,050,926 residents, over 2,670 square kilometers. As of September 2009, the board operates 145 Catholic schools (120 elementary and 25 secondary) throughout Mississauga, Brampton, Caledon and Orangeville, with a student enrolment of approximately 86,951 (52,747 elementary and 34,204 secondary students). In addition, over 30,000 students enrol in the board's Adult and Continuing Education Programs each year.

To stay informed, we hope you take the time to visit the Board's website at www.dpcdsb.org to access the Director's Annual Report and other valuable information.



Mission

Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board, in partnership with the family and church, is to provide, in a responsible manner, a Catholic education which develops spiritual, intellectual, aesthetic, emotional, social, and physical capabilities of each individual to live fully today and to meet the challenges of the future, thus enriching the community.

**Celebrating 40 years of Success
1969 - 2009**

Parish Info

Email: admin@stdominicschurch.ca

Website www.stdominicschurch.ca



A Catholic faith community is rooted in a set of common beliefs which are inspired by the life, mission and teaching of Jesus. We grow together as disciples of Jesus in a Catholic educational community by continuously articulating and celebrating those common beliefs.

As a Catholic community, we are called to learn and to grow and to become more like Jesus in the way we see and treat others. Our Catholic faith plays an important role in helping us shape schools that are safe caring and inclusive.

Catholic school education provides us the opportunity to integrate virtues formation into all areas of our school life within the context of our faith. We celebrate the virtues at St. Dominic through assemblies, recognizing students who have exemplified these virtues and through various other activities initiated through our STARR committee.

STARR stands for Safe, Tolerant, Acceptance, Respect and Responsible. This committee of dedicated individuals work with Peel Public Health on a range of successful projects such as PALS, anti-bullying presentations, the Wellness Group and various other community projects. The staff and students at St. Dominic do their utmost to uphold the principles and pursue the actions which help sustain St. Dominic Catholic School as a Culture of Peace, a place of compassion, tolerance and respect.

Facts About Catholic Education in Ontario

Catholic population in Ontario: 3,611,688 (approx. 33%)

Number of Catholic District School Boards: 29

Number of Catholic School Authorities: 5

Number of Catholic trustees: 245

Number of Catholic schools: Approximately 1,500

Enrolment in Catholic schools: Over 600,000

Source: OCSTA

School Councils

Catholic School Councils: Making a Difference

School councils play a vital role in the education system in Ontario. They provide a forum through which parents and other members of school communities can contribute to improving student achievement and school performance.

In 2000-2001, the Ontario government took significant steps to ensure that parents, through their school councils, would have greater influence in their children's education. Regulations were created that confirm the advisory role of school councils and clearly state that their purpose is to improve student achievement and enhance the accountability of the education system to parents.

School councils are now able to make recommendations to their principals and school boards on any matter. Principals and school boards, in turn, must consult with school councils on a variety of matters that affect student learning. They must also consider recommendations made by school councils and report back to the councils on how they plan to act.

St. Dominic Parent Advisory Council

A partnership between parents, schools and the Church is really important and one way to get involved is to join the St. Dominic Parent Council.

Purpose:

The purpose of a Catholic School Council is, through active participation of parents, to improve pupil achievement and to enhance accountability of the education system to parents. A Catholic School Council's primary means of achieving its purpose is by making recommendations, in accordance with the policy and regulation, to the principal of the school and to the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board.¹

At St. Dominic School, elections are held by the last day of September. Any parent can join council. It's a great opportunity for you to get to know other parents and make a difference in the school. There are a few roles which are elected positions and they are: Chair, Treasurer and Secretary. Also on Council is a Parish Representative. All Council meetings are attended by the Principal and a teacher representative. At St. Dominic School, we typically meet 6 times in the school

¹ Reference: A Handbook for Catholic School Councils – May 2009

year (between September and June). Everyone is invited to attend a parent council meeting, however, only members of council are permitted to vote.

A formal agenda is issued prior to the meeting and quorum is determined at the start of every term. Formal minutes are issued after each meeting. Meetings are held in the evening, usually at 7 pm in the Library and conclude at 8:30 pm. Parent Council are very involved in two major fundraisers per year and funds raised are allocated in partnership between the teaching staff and council, and are based on the priority needs of the students and school.

When you join Parent Council, your role is to represent the parents of the school.

“Anyone can do so little,
together we can do so much.”

Helen Keller

How Can Parents Get Involved at St. Dominic?

There are many ways you can get involved, and the school is always looking for volunteers. Here are some examples of things that you could volunteer for:

- Reading to the primary grades as part of the literacy program (All Star)
- Helping with open house and outreach projects
- Helping on school trips, when additional parents are required
- Being a part of parent council or attending the meetings

If you can volunteer any time at the school, please speak with the Principal. As a volunteer working with students, you will need to undergo a criminal check, which is for safety reasons, and is mandated by the Board.

School Closure Due to Weather

During the winter months, inclement weather and/or poor road conditions may cause the disruption of bus transportation and regular school operations. In these cases, parents/guardians should develop alternate care/transportation arrangements.

A decision to cancel bus transportation and/or to close schools is made by 6:00 a.m. Decisions are based on several factors including precipitation, air temperature and road conditions. A decision to cancel bus transportation may be system wide (where all buses in Dufferin County and the Region of Peel are cancelled) or municipality specific (where buses in one or more municipalities are cancelled).

If buses are cancelled in the morning, they will not operate in the afternoon. Therefore students transported to school by parents require the same transportation home.

Notification

Parents/guardians, students and school staff are asked to monitor the following radio/television stations after 6:00 a.m. to receive bus cancellation/school closure information.

Radio:

CKFM 99.9
CJCL 590
CHFI 98.1
CFTR 680
FOXY 88.5 FM
CFNY 102.1
93.1 FM
102.7 FM (Caledon)

CHUM 1050
CJBC (FR) 860 AM
CJEZ EZ ROCK 97.3
CFRB 1010
Z103.5
CHIN 100.7 FM / 1540 AM
CJMR/CHOW 1250

Television:

CFTO
Global
CP 24
CBC
The Weather Network

A bus cancellation and/or school closure message will also be available online at www.dpcdsb.org or by calling 905-890-1221.

Our School Board Trustee

What is the role of a School Board Trustee?

The Board of Trustees is an elected municipal body that represents Catholic ratepayers interests in overseeing the provisions of the Education Act and its Regulations. Trustees make policy, approve the Board's budget and direct staff in the organization and operation of the system. Trustees act as advocates for their constituents and welcome communication from parents/guardians, ratepayers and other members of the community.

Our Trustee at St. Dominic School is Mario Pascucci. Below is a brief bio of Mario and his contact details:

Mario Pascucci

Tel: (905) 624-3663

Fax: (905) 624-6823

mario.pascucci@dpcdsb.org

Mario Pascucci has served the Dufferin-Peel Catholic community as a trustee for 24 years, representing Mississauga Wards 1 & 3. He served as chair of the board in 2009.

He has chaired a number of Board Committees including Administration and Finance, Audit, Faith and Program, and Architect Review. Pascucci has also chaired the Mississauga Library Board for over three years. He served as co-chair for the John Cabot Secondary School Council. A graduate of York University and a Mississauga resident for over 35 years, Mario Pascucci is founder and president of a Marketing Corporation that specializes in representing food companies, and importing and distributing of collectible fine gifts from Europe.

Student Transportation – Frequently Asked Questions (from the Board Office)

Page 2 of student transportation page

Parent Tip Sheet – Riding the Bus

Page 2 of bus sheet

Page 3 of bus sheet

New Homework Policy (eff Nov. 2008)

Insert page 2 here

Below are some helpful **Be's** to support families in the homework process:

<i>Be positive</i>	Communicate a positive attitude towards homework.
<i>Be consistent</i> and space.	Develop a homework routine that includes a set time
<i>Be available</i> assistance	Encourage independent work but be available for
<i>Be attentive</i> school day.	Take a few minutes every day to chat about the
<i>Be a role model</i> math.	Let your child see you reading, writing, and using
<i>Be a cheerleader</i>	Praise your child for the effort displayed.
<i>Be observant</i>	Note any signs of frustration.
<i>Be involved</i>	Participate in school functions.

Homework Help

Free real-time math tutoring now available

Grade 7 to 10 math students at Dufferin-Peel now have access to 20 hours a week of free, online math tutoring to help them improve and succeed in math. Check out Homework Help where certified Ontario teachers are available Sunday to Thursday, 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., for one-on-one confidential help. Dufferin-Peel is one of 15 English-language boards taking part in this pilot project funded by the Ministry of Education.

Registered students in Grades 7 through 10 math are able to:

- Access a collection of on-line math resources 24/7
- Access free personalized tutoring from a certified Ontario math teacher

Other important information about the service:

- Chats take place Sunday to Thursday between the hours of 5:30 – 9:30 pm
- Homework Help is free, live and anonymous
- Visit

Visit <http://homeworkhelp.ilc.org/> to learn more!

If your child has not yet registered, student registration can be completed by visiting Homework Help. All students will require the Dufferin-Peel access code which can be obtained from your child's teacher or by contacting: *e-Learning 905-890-1221 x 24484*.

Tips for Parents – Homework – People for Education

Please reference the next page which is courtesy of People for Education. It offers excellent tips for parents and how they can help and support their children.

Insert People for Education homework page 1

insert people for education homework help page 2 of 2

Ontario Educational Resource Bank



Students and parents for grades K to 12 can now access excellent online learning resources contributed by the Ministry of Education and Ontario teachers from across the province through the Ontario Educational Resource Bank (OERB). The OERB provides students/parents with access to thousands of resources that range from interactive multimedia pieces to lessons and activities.

Inside the OERB:

- Resources of varying types including lesson/unit plans, videos, activities, maps, and interactive multimedia objects
- Resources that are aligned with the Ontario curriculum including Catholic specific resources
- Content is created by either the Ministry or contributed by Ontario teachers
- Search resources by keyword or grade, course/subject, strand, or overall expectation, learning style, file format using SEARCH 2.0

Visit: <http://resources.elearningontario.ca>

For the parent/student username and password information please contact your child's (or children's) school or contact:

Kevin Williams
e-Learning contact

Kevin.williams@dpcdsb.org

Parent Tip Sheets from the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board:

Literacy Tips

Literacy Tips²

"A love of reading and a taste for literature are the finest gifts we can give our children, for we have started them on the path of a lifetime pleasure."

(Charlotte Huck, Children's Literature in the Elementary School)

Consider these goals for your child's reading development:

1. To enjoy and be encouraged to read. To experience satisfaction and success from reading.
2. To develop a regular routine of reading.
3. To develop confidence in oneself as a reader.
4. To appreciate a wide variety of literature (poetry, fiction, non-fiction, plays)
5. To develop the skills, concepts, and abilities necessary to communicate in a literate society.

Supporting Your Child's Reading Efforts

Keep in mind, the goal of reading is understanding.

To help your child understand the reading process, share with them what you do as you read.

Reinforce your child's reading. Comment positively on a reading behaviour or skill you notice is improving.

Continue to read to your child even after they are independent readers, opportunities to hear stories above their reading ability stretches their comprehension skills, expands their vocabulary, provides a good example and nurtures a love of books.

If your child is really keen about one particular book, find similar stories and compare.

Turn off the T.V.

Match books to your child's interests and reading ability. Visit the library.

Be patient and supportive and enjoy observing your child's growth in reading and writing.

² Reference: Dufferin-Peel Catholic School Board Website

Being Environmentally Aware

Growing Up Healthy

Parent Tip Sheets from People for Education

Starting School

Page 2 of starting school

Parent Teacher Interviews

Special Education

What is EQAO?

EQAO is an independent agency of the Ontario government. EQAO provides accurate, objective and clear information about student achievement and the quality of publicly funded education in Ontario. In addition, EQAO works to ensure that this information is used to bring about improvement for individual students and for the education system as a whole.

Who is the contact person at EQAO?

People who have questions, concerns or suggestions are encouraged to contact EQAO by phone at 1-888-327-7377 or by [e-mail](#). More information is also available at www.eqao.com.

What testing does EQAO do?

EQAO develops and implements provincial assessment programs for primary, junior and secondary school students in Ontario.

EQAO assesses all students in Grade 3 and Grade 6 in reading, writing and mathematics. EQAO also administers two secondary school assessments. The Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) is administered in March each year. The Grade 9 Assessment of Mathematics is administered in January to students enrolled in first-semester mathematics courses and in May/June to students enrolled in second-semester and full-year courses.

EQAO also coordinates Ontario's participation in several national and international assessments. The Pan-Canadian Assessment Program (PCAP) is conducted by the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada and evaluates 13-year-olds' skills in reading, mathematics and science. The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is sponsored by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and involves random samples of 15-year-olds in similar subjects. The Trends in Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) assesses student learning worldwide in Grades 4 and 8. The Second International Technology in Education Studies (SITES) focuses on computer use in primary and junior schools. Both TIMSS and SITES are programs of the International Association for Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA).

Why is EQAO testing Ontario students?

EQAO was established based on a recommendation of the Ontario Royal Commission on Learning in 1995. The Commission consulted extensively with educators, parents, students and taxpayers and concluded that province-wide assessments would help to respond to public demands for greater quality and accountability in the publicly funded school system.

EQAO's assessments provide accurate, objective and clear information about student achievement that teachers and parents can use to improve learning for all students. EQAO publishes school and school board reports that parents, educators, policy-makers and members of the public can use to monitor the effectiveness of the education system over time.

What are the key benefits of EQAO's work?

Students know more about how well they are doing in reading, writing and/or mathematics and what they need to do in order to improve.

Teachers and principals have more feedback on how well students are meeting the expectations in the provincial curriculum and how effectively teaching strategies and school programs are meeting students' needs.

Parents are more familiar with the expectations in the provincial curriculum and better informed about their children's achievement and progress.

Ontarians have accurate and objective information about student achievement and education quality in the publicly funded education system.

How Do I find Individual Student results?

All students who participated in EQAO's tests receive an Individual Student Report (ISR). This report contains personal information that is protected under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

EQAO sends ISRs to schools for distribution to students who wrote the Grades 3, 6 and 9 assessments and the OSSLT. For further information, please contact your school's principal.

Frequently asked questions by parents about EQAO:

My child is very anxious about writing EQAO. How can I help him/her? As a parent, reassure your child of their success. Stick to routines and remind them of the strategies taught throughout the school year.

How does EQAO affect my child's grade 3 or 6 marks? EQAO provides a snapshot of your child's achievement in relation to the provincial standard. It does not affect their report card mark.

How can we prepare for EQAO week as a parent? As a parent, it's valuable for you to attend the parent information night on EQAO offered by the school. You can also visit the EQAO website noted on page 32 in this reference booklet.

The next page is a Parent Tip Sheet from People for Education about EQAO Testing that will provide you with more information

Parent Tip Sheet from People for Education – EQAO

Community Resources Available to You

Below are some valuable resources available to you in our community.

1. Peel Public Health 905-799-7700

www.peelregion.ca/health

2. Child Development Resource Connection Peel 905-890-9432

www.cdrcp.com

3. Telehealth

1-866-797-0000

Free Access to a Registered Nurse — 24 Hours a day, 7 days a Week.

4. Erinoak Kids 905 820 7111

www.erinoakkids.ca

Programs and Services

- [Halton - Peel Preschool Speech and Language Programs - Client Services Intake Centre 905-855-3557](#)
- [Central West Infant Hearing Program \(CWIHP\)](#)
- [Central West Blind Low Vision Program \(CWBLVP\)](#)
- [Child and Youth Rehabilitation Program:](#)
- [Central West Autism Intervention Services](#)
- [Central West School Support Program-Autism Spectrum Disorders \(CWSSP-ASD\)](#)

5. Mississauga Halton Community Care Access Centre 905-855-9090

www.ccac-ont.ca/Content.aspx?EnterpriseID=6&LanguageID=1&MenuID=1

6. Peel Behavioural Services

905-712-4124

www.peelbehaviouralservices.ca

7. Community Living Mississauga 905 542 2694

www.clmiss.ca

8. Peel Children's Centre Main Office: (905) 795-3500

Crisis Response Service: (416) 410-8615

24 hours a day, 7 days a week

www.peelcc.org

9. Trillium Health Centre, Paediatric Outpatient Services (POPS Program)

Phone: 416-521-4120

P.O.P.S. is a multidisciplinary assessment/treatment program whose team includes Occupational Therapists, Psychologists and Speech and Language

Pathologists. It provides assessment, diagnosis and treatment for preschoolers between the ages of 2 and 5 ½ years of age who have developmental disabilities such as autism or Asperger's disorder. Counselling, education and support is offered to families. The P.O.P.S. team connects families with community services and provides ongoing collaboration. Children must live in Mississauga or have a doctor who is on staff at Trillium Health Centre. A doctor's referral is required.

10. Catholic Family Services of Peel

Mississauga Office

The Emerald Centre (HWY 10 - 1 block North of 403)
10 Kingsbridge Garden Circle, Unit 400
Mississauga, ON L5R 3K6

Telephone: 905 897-1644
Fax: 905.897.2467

Walk In Clinic Hours: Tuesdays 12:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

11. Family Services of Peel

905-453-5775.

151 City Centre Drive
Suite 501
Mississauga, Ontario
L5B 1M7 905-270-2250

www.fspeel.org

12. Ontario Early Years Centres Mississauga East

Address:

3160 Tomken Rd., Mississauga, Ontario, L4Y 2Y6

Tel.: 905-276-6392

Healthy Food & Recipe Suggestions from Peel Public Health

The next few pages are courtesy of the Peel Public Health – Region of Peel. Try some of these recipes with your family! Also, please reference Health Canada’s [Eating Well with Canada’s Food Guide](#) for more valuable healthy eating information.

Banana Berry Wake-Up Shake³

Here’s a quick shake that’s perfect for a breakfast-to-go or for a snack anytime. Enjoy with a whole-grain or bran muffin.

Method

- In a blender, mix fruit with a small amount of the milk.
- Add remaining milk, yogurt and cereal; blend until smooth.
- If shake is too thick, add extra milk to achieve the desired consistency.
- Sprinkle 100% bran cereal on top for added fibre.

Nutritional Information

Per Serving (about 1 ¾ cups or 400 ml):

- 234 calories
- 9 g protein
- 4 g fat
- 44 g carbohydrate
- 3 g fibre

Excellent source of calcium, riboflavin, vitamin B6 and B12. Good source of vitamin C and folacin.

Ingredients

1 banana

1 cup
(250 ml) fresh or frozen berries (any combination)

1 cup
(250 ml) milk

¾ cup
(175 ml) lower-fat vanilla yogurt

optional: sprinkling of 100% bran cereal

From Cook Great Food © 2000. Published by Robert Rose. Reprinted by permission of [Dietitians of Canada](#).

³ Reference: Peel Region of Health Website

Yummy in the Tummy Banana Muffins



125 mL (1/2 cup) all-purpose flour
125 mL (1/2 cup) white sugar
125 mL (1/2 cup) whole wheat flour
2 medium, ripe bananas
12 mL (2 1/2 tsp) baking powder
1 egg
1 mL (1/4 tsp) baking soda
125 mL (1/2 cup) milk
175 mL (3/4 cup) rolled oats
45 mL (3 tbsp) non-hydrogenated margarine, melted
50 mL (1/4 cup) lightly packed brown sugar

Food for Thought:

Omega-3 fatty acids are important for children's healthy development of the eyes, nerves and brain.

1. Preheat oven to 190 C (375 F).
2. Put the all-purpose flour, whole wheat flour, baking powder and baking soda in a large bowl. Stir in oats, sugar, and brown sugar. Set aside.
3. Mash bananas in a medium bowl. Add egg, milk, and melted margarine. Mix well.
4. Stir banana mixture into the dry ingredients. Stir just until blended. Do not over mix.
5. Lightly grease 12 large muffin cups. Put the muffin batter into the muffin cups.
6. Bake in oven until tops are firm when lightly touched with your finger, about 18-20 minutes.
7. Remove muffins from the tin and cool.

Makes 12 muffins. For little tummies, use mini muffin cups...they are more appealing to kids!

Source: The Basic Shelf Cookbook, City of York Health Unit, 1995.



Add 15 mL (1 tbsp) of flaxseed powder to increase the fibre and omega-3 fatty acid content of your recipes.

Trail Mix & Match

Ingredients

Equipment

- Dry measures
- Large mixing bowl
- Airtight container
- Mixing spoon

½ cup
(125 ml) popped popcorn

½ cup
(125 ml) dry fruits

½ cup
(125 ml) nuts

½ cup
(125 ml) dry cereals

½ cup
(125 ml) small unsalted pretzels

Microwave Method

1. Chop dry nuts (if used)
2. Choose 2 of the following dry fruits: dry cranberries, dry pineapple, dry apple slices, dry papaya pieces, chopped dry apricots, raisins, shredded unsweetened coconut, or chopped dates.
3. Choose 2 of the following unsalted nuts: peanuts, sunflower seeds, cashews, almonds, walnuts, or soy nuts.
4. Choose 1 of the following dry cereals: oat rings (lowfat), granola, wheat or corn squares.
5. In a bowl, mix chosen ingredients with the popcorn or pretzels.
6. Store in airtight container.

Nutrition Information

Will depend on ingredient choices.

Cheesy Macaroni and Cheese

500 mL (2 cups) uncooked macaroni

284 mL (10 oz) canned cream of mushroom soup

250 mL (1 cup) milk

125 mL (1/2 cup) onion, finely chopped

375 mL (1 1/2 cup) cheddar or mozzarella cheese, grated

Food for Thought:

Pasta is a source of B vitamins and iron.

1. Preheat oven to 175 C (350 F).
2. Cook macaroni in boiling water; drain and set aside.
3. Mix cream of mushroom soup, milk, and onion; heat and bring to a boil. Add macaroni and 175 mL (3/4 cup) cheese.
4. Pour into an oven proof dish and sprinkle with remaining cheese.
5. Bake at 175 C (350 F) for 20 minutes. Turn oven to “broil” for 2 to 3 minutes, until cheese is browned.

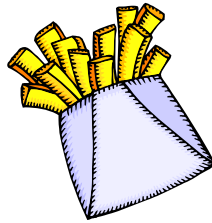
Makes 4 – 6 servings.

Source: Dairy Farmers of Ontario 2003.



Need some color? Add broccoli or red peppers or both! You'll be adding vitamin C and fibre.

Veggie Fries



2 medium potatoes

1 sweet potato

1 parsnip

2 carrots

30 mL (2 tbsp) vegetable oil

Salt and pepper

30 mL (2 tbsp) fresh parsley, cilantro, rosemary or dill, chopped (optional)

Food for Thought:

Sweet potatoes are an excellent source of vitamin A.

1. Preheat oven to 220 C (425 F). Lightly oil 2 baking sheets.
2. Cut the clean and peeled vegetables into wedges of the same size. Place in a bowl, add the oil and toss.
3. Spread the vegetables in an even layer on the baking sheets.
4. Bake for 20 minutes until crisp and lightly brown. Turn the fries over half way through the baking.
5. Sprinkle lightly with salt, pepper and fresh herbs (if using). Serve immediately.

Makes 6 – 8 servings.

Source: *Cooking in the Community, Toronto Public Health, 2004.*



Try dipping the fries in hummus. Hummus is good for its protein, folic acid and fibre.

Mamma's Chili

900 g (2 lbs) of lean ground beef or chicken
200 mL (7 oz) can whole kernel corn
1 onion, minced
30 mL (2 tbsp) hilli powder
3 cloves garlic, minced
5 mL (1 tsp) ground cumin
3 x 445 mL (14.5 oz) cans diced tomatoes
pepper to taste
250 mL (8 oz) can tomato sauce
5 mL (1 tsp) hot pepper sauce (optional)
250 mL (1 cup) water
540 mL (19 oz) can kidney beans
540 mL (19 oz) can garbanzo or pinto beans

Food for Thought:

Adding legumes (beans, lentils and chick peas) to any recipe increases the amount of fibre, folic acid and iron.

1. In a large pot lightly brown lean ground beef or chicken, and drain fat.
2. Add onion and garlic and cook until onion is tender.
3. Add tomatoes, tomato sauce, water, kidney beans, garbanzo or pinto beans, corn, hilli powder, cumin, pepper and hot sauce.
4. Simmer for 30 minutes and serve with rice, noodles or a bun.

Makes 8 servings.



Add your favourite chopped vegetables such as green pepper, shredded carrots, zucchini, etc...to add vitamins and minerals!

Easy Fajitas

If you prefer, substitute chicken with beef or pork – it's a great way to use leftover meat. Use any vegetable that your family loves.

- 1 pepper or other vegetable sliced
- 250 mL (1 cup) grated cheese
- 15 mL (1 tbsp) vegetable oil
- 500 mL (2 cup) cooked warm chicken
- 1 onion sliced
- 300 mL (1 1/4 cup) salsa
- 1 diced tomato
- 8 small whole wheat flour tortillas

Food for Thought:

Red peppers are higher in beta carotene (vitamin A) and vitamin C than green peppers.

1. Stir fry the onion and vegetable until tender in a pan with vegetable oil.
2. Place all ingredients on a large platter in piles
3. Put the salsa in a bowl.
4. Each person can make their own fajita, adding the ingredients that they like onto the centre of a tortilla. Add a spoonful of salsa if desired.
5. Roll or fold the tortilla to contain the ingredients.

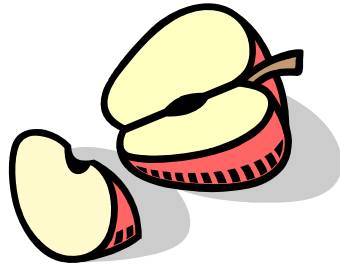
It's ready to eat!

Makes 4 – 6 servings.



Want to try something a bit different? Try other great varieties of tortillas, such as tomato or spinach.

Awesome Apple Crisp



900 g (5 cups) apples, washed, peeled and sliced
25 mL (2 tbsp) brown sugar
125 mL (1/2 cup) rolled oats
50 mL (1/4 cup) all-purpose flour
125 mL (1/2 cup) brown sugar
2 mL (1/2 tsp) cinnamon
75 mL (1/3 cup) non-hydrogenated margarine or butter, softened

Food for Thought:

Rolled oats and apples are good sources of fibre.

1. Preheat oven to 180 C (350 F).
2. Prepare the apples and place them in the baking dish. Add 25 mL (2 tbsp) brown sugar.
3. To make the topping, measure the brown sugar, rolled oats, all-purpose flour, cinnamon and butter into a bowl. Mix together until crumbly.
4. Sprinkle the topping over the apples.
5. Bake uncovered for 30 minutes or until the fruit is tender when tested with a fork.

Makes 6 servings.

Source: Cooking in the Community, Toronto Public Health, 2004.



Instead of using just all-purpose flour, mix half whole wheat flour and half all-purpose flour to add extra fibre.

Chicken Pizza

Preheat oven to 350°F.

1 12-inch pizza dough round, prepared or homemade

1/3 cup tomato paste

1/3 cup water

1 tbsp vegetable oil

1/2 tsp dried oregano

1/4 tsp celery seed

Dash hot pepper sauce

Pinch black pepper

1 cup sliced mushrooms

1 cup diced cooked chicken

1/2 cup diced canned pineapple

1/4 cup diced green bell pepper

1 1/2 cups shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese

2 tbsp grated Parmesan cheese

Dried oregano and celery seed

1. Place pizza dough round on large baking sheet. Combine tomato paste, water, oil and seasonings. Spread over dough. Arrange mushrooms, chicken, pineapple, and green pepper on top. Top with mozzarella and Parmesan cheese. Sprinkle with oregano and celery seed. Bake in preheated oven for 12 to 15 minutes. Cut into wedges and serve.

Makes 6 servings

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● Be active together

How Much Activity Do Children Need?

What are Some Activity Ideas?

Be Active Together Home

Physical Fitness - How much activity do children need?

Young Children (0 to 6 years)

Although children seem pretty active, many young children are confined to strollers, baby seats or playpens for long periods of time. Young children need to be active every day to help them learn to walk, run, cope with their emotions and make physical activity a normal part of everyday life. Be active with your children and lead by example.

School Age Children (6 to 14 years)

[Canada's Physical Activity Guide for Children](#) recommends increasing children's current physical activity by at least **30 minutes a day**. Keep increasing physical activity time gradually to reach the goal of at least **90 minutes per day**.

The 90 minutes of physical activity should include:

1 hour of **moderate** activities such as walking or biking, and
½ an hour of **vigorous** activity such as playing soccer, running, skipping rope or playing basketball.

The 90 minutes of activity does not have to be done all at one time, it can be done in 10-15 minute periods throughout the day.

Example: **20** minutes walking to school
20 minutes doing gymnastics in gym class
20 minutes running around on the playground at lunch time

20 minutes biking with friends after school

10 minutes walking the dog after dinner

Try to include these three types of activities:

1. **Endurance** – Running, swimming, and soccer are activities that strengthen the heart and lungs.
2. **Flexibility** – Try bending, stretching, or reaching in activities like gymnastics or dancing.
3. **Strength** – Climbing or helping carry the groceries are activities that help build strong muscles and bones.

Find **FUN** activities for your children and the entire family!

Parent Tip Sheet from People for Education – Health & Physical Education / Daily Physical Activity



Ministry of Education Parent Tip Sheets on Learning Strategies

These next few pages are from the Ministry of Education's abc123 program and provide excellent tips for parents in the following areas:

- reading
- math
- writing
- homework
- getting ready for school
- helping your son read
- talking to the teacher
- choosing books for your child

More information is available by accessing the Ministry of Education's website at <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/abc123/eng/>



10 Tips to help your child with reading

Tips for kindergarten to grade 3

1. **Cuddle up and read.** Quiet times together are opportunities to bond...and read. The cuddling can be as important as the reading. Make it exciting: put some drama into your voice or let your child read every other page. As you go, explain any new words or ideas.
2. **Public libraries today are worlds to explore so try to go regularly.** Your library has great resources – books, computer games, DVDs, CDs, magazines, newspapers and Internet access. There are also terrific in-house programs such as reading circles for little ones and homework clubs for older children. If you have access to a public library, talk to the librarian about what is available.
3. **Make your kitchen part of your "reading zone".** Have fridge magnets available so children can start making words and short sentences.
4. **Words are everywhere – take everyday opportunities to read with your child.** Your child's world is filled with words – on cereal boxes, street signs, stores, posters, subway ads, etc. Wherever you go, you can always find new words and point them out.
5. **Games can be great learning tools.** Board games or card games such as word bingo or memory and rhyming cards can be a fun way to learn about words, letter sounds, and reading. They can help children realize how much fun learning can be. Check out your local school fair or second-hand stores for gently used games. You can even create your own by cutting out pictures, writing words on cards and getting you child to match them.
6. **Computers are reader friendly too!** Though many worry that kids may spend too much time on the computer, there are some great games that help kids learn to read and allow them to create their own stories. Look for "parent approved" on the packaging in stores and in the library. Find some kid-friendly websites, like [TVOKids](#) and [Canadian Geoillustrated for Kids](#), that have games you can play along with your child.
7. **Books make great gifts.** Ask family and friends to give a book instead of a toy as a gift. Make sure to tell them about your child's reading level and interests. To build up a home library find almost-new books at garage sales and school fairs.
8. **Subscribe to a magazine.** There's no substitute for the excitement of receiving mail. Let your kids subscribe to their favourite age-appropriate magazine and watch their eyes light up with the arrival of each new issue. Great magazines for younger children include *Chirp*® and *Chickadee*®.
9. **Be a reading role model.** When your kids see you reading, they will want to imitate you. It won't be long until they learn that reading is fun, interesting, and a "grown up" thing to do.
10. **Keep books, magazines and newspapers handy.** Keep a box in the kitchen or living room for easy access.



Tips for grades 4 to 6

1. **Keep reading with your child.** Kids are never too old to be read to—or let your kids read to you. Read a variety of material – magazines, newspapers, books, poems and comic books. Try cutting out or printing interesting or funny articles to share with them.
2. **Public libraries today are worlds to explore so try and go regularly.** Your library has great resources – books, computer games, DVDs, CDs, magazines, newspapers and Internet access. There are also terrific in-house programs such as reading circles for little ones and homework clubs for older children. If you have access to a public library, talk to the librarian about what is available.
3. **Read some of the same books as your child.** There are many books that are loved by people of all ages. Ask your librarian or child's teacher for suggestions. You can share your thoughts and ideas, and have great conversations about the characters, stories or topics.
4. **Ask your children what they're reading.** Ask what it's about and what is most enjoyable about the book. Ask your child to describe it to you.
5. **Tap into interests and hobbies.** Kids are more likely to read about what they find really interesting, like sports or crafts. Don't worry if it's a comic book, magazine or an illustrated novel, just remember all reading is good and tastes will change as they get older. When you go to the library, let them choose their own books.
6. **Find books that relate to TV shows.** Let's face it, TV and video games are part of life now and our kids benefit when we help them learn how to think about these messages too. We also know that some kids find TV and video games fascinating. You can use this to your advantage—introduce them to books or magazines that relate to their favourite shows, movies or games.
7. **Encourage your older kids to read to younger kids.** The older child will practice reading out loud and the younger child will enjoy being read to. Best of all, they get to enjoy spending time together.
8. **Play games together.** Trivia games and board games such as *Junior Trivial Pursuit®* or *Junior Scrabble®* can be a fun way to learn about words and reading. Children have such a good time playing they don't realize they are learning.
9. **Computers can be reading zones too!** Though we all feel that kids may spend too much time on the computer, there are some great games that help kids with reading and allow them to create their own stories and books. Look for "parent approved" on the box in stores and in the library.
10. **Give praise.** The best motivation comes from your positive feedback. Whenever your child finishes a reading or writing assignment, ask about what was read and praise your child's effort.

A special note: Educators agree that literacy skills develop and improve as a result of a wide range of activities. For example, a child's literacy skills are enhanced when parents who do not speak one of Canada's official languages read to their children in their native language. Children will benefit from this reading experience.



10 Tips to help your child with math

Tips for kindergarten to grade 3

1. **Counting can be fun and entertaining.** Sing counting songs such as "One, Two Buckle My Shoe". Your local librarian can recommend fun counting books. Play Hopscotch – it's a counting game! There are lots of games where you count, such as *Snakes and Ladders*, *Dominoes*, *Crazy Eights* and *Candyland*®.
2. **Computers + math = fun.** There are great computer games available for math – ask your librarian or check out your local computer store. Make sure they are "parent approved". There are also super websites that have fun math games, such as [TVOKids](#), or do an Internet search for other sites.
3. **Start Easy and Work Up!** Once they have got the hang of counting by 1s, introduce skip counting, such as counting by 2s and 5s.
4. **Use household items for counting practice.** Practise adding and subtracting with objects found around your house like spoons or pots and pans. When they've become good at these skills, move on to simple multiplication.
5. **Tap into your child's curiosity.** Go on a number hunt together and discover places where numbers are used such as a clock, TV, computer keyboard, calendar, telephones and licence plates.
6. **Use everyday activities.** Your child's world is filled with everyday math problems that can be solved. For example, "There are four people in our family and we each need a knife and a fork to eat dinner. How many knives and forks do we need to set the table?"
7. **Kitchens can be math zones.** Bake some muffins or cookies and ask your child to help you measure out the ingredients. It may be a bit messy but it's fun family time and there's nothing like a fresh cookie as a reward. Have math fridge magnets available so children can start making number patterns and doing simple math problems.
8. **Predict and compare.** Start to measure and estimate things like how far it is from the driveway to the house or how long a trip will take and then measure and compare the actual time it takes.
9. **Talk about time.** The concept of time can be hard to grasp. Talk to your kids about minutes and hours. Then get them to try counting days and weeks – for example how many "sleeps" until the weekend or a visit to a friend or relative.
10. **Identify geometric shapes and sizes.** Play "I Spy". Instead of looking for words beginning with a letter, look for different colours or shapes and count the number you find in the room.



10 Tips to help your child with math Tips for grades 4 to 6

1. **Connect math to daily life.** Let your kids know the importance of math in day-to-day living. Talk about the ways you use math in your job and around the house. Show them a tax form or how you pay the bills. Ask them how they used math during the day.
2. **Practise mental math using coins.** For example, show that a certain item costs a certain amount and ask what coins are needed to pay for it.
3. **Play games together.** Show them math can be fun and exciting. Play family games to add excitement to math activities, like chess or checkers or games in the car such as math bingo or adding licence plate numbers. Lots of board games need math such as *Junior Monopoly*® or play card games such as *Uno*®.
4. **Cooking can be counting fun!** Get older children involved in helping out at dinner time and let them help measure ingredients for dishes or estimate the number of potatoes that are needed to feed everyone.
5. **Play the estimating game.** Ask your kids to estimate measurements, distances, time and grocery bills. Be sure to compare the estimate with actual. Or get them to guess how much the apples you are going to buy will weigh and then take them to the scale in the grocery store and find out.
6. **Perform time calculations.** For example, make up a sentence and ask your child to recite it as many times as possible in 15 seconds. Then ask how many times it could be repeated in 1 minute, 5 minutes, 10 minutes, etc.
7. **Use common toys to understand math concepts.** Build a tower from blocks. Count the blocks. Then talk about the need for a base of the right size and the stability it creates.
8. **Sports and math.** There is a lot of math used in sports: batting averages, points per game, save percentages – these are math terms that a sports enthusiast will love. If you watch a game with your child, read the newspaper report together sometime the next day and talk about the math concepts.
9. **Computers + math = fun.** There are great computer games available for math—ask your librarian or check out your local computer store. Make sure they are "parent approved". There are also super websites that have fun math games, so do an Internet search for sites and bookmark them for future use.
10. **Measuring made easy.** Estimate and measure the area of different shapes. For example, use small square objects (plastic tiles, dice, etc.) to estimate then measure how many are needed to fill the area of various flat surfaces such as a magazine cover.



10 Tips to help your child with writing

Tips for kindergarten to grade 3

1. **Read from a variety of sources.** Reading and writing are linked – success in one supports success in the other. Read stories, newspapers, advertisements, instructions, etc. to your child every day and then discuss what you have read.
2. **Encourage your child to write.** Children love to make their own birthday cards, write thank you notes, make place cards for the table, or send an email to a friend. Save old cards from birthdays and holidays to recycle for homemade cards. Whenever possible, let your child see you writing – grocery lists, instructions on the family whiteboard, emails, etc. – and get them to help.
3. **Writing can be done anywhere.** Have lots of magnetic letters or words on the fridge. Get a box of chalk and write your names on the driveway or sidewalk. Get a white board – it can be used again and again.
4. **Play writing games.** Make a game of letter finding. Show them how to form a letter and then go letter hunting in your house or in a book – count the number of "Ds" on a page. Find a picture they like and have them write words or a sentence about it.
5. **Help children build their vocabulary.** Try rhyming games starting with one word such as "mat". Say and write down all the words that rhyme, like "cat", "hat", "fat" and "splat". You'll be surprised how fast their word list grows.
6. **Explore the meaning of words.** Create a word book at home and have your child add words as they're learned. Have them note the words they use the most and talk about why.
7. **Write to each other.** Write notes to your child and leave them in interesting places, like the lunch box. Ask them to write a reply or come up with something new. If they have their own email, email each other. Have kids email jokes to family and friends.
8. **Don't limit what you write with or what you write on.** The sky's the limit – pudding, sticks or fingers in mud, earth, snow and sand, sparklers, steamed up windows and mirrors, and bubble soap markers for some sudsy learning.
9. **Writing comes in all shapes and sizes.** Point out different ways writing is used – letters, signs, advertisements, instructions – and explain why they are different. Also point out different ways letters are created – printed, cursive (written) and fancy variations. Let them be inspired to create their own letter art.
10. **Start writing at an early age.** Children often learn to write before they can read. Encourage this by showing them how to print their name or the names of friends and other family members. Buy them notebooks with lines so they can learn to make their letters correctly or a practice book with letters they can trace.



10 Tips to help your child with writing

Tips for grades 4 to 6

1. **Read from a variety of sources.** Reading and writing are linked – success in one supports success in the other. Read stories, articles, ads, instructions, etc. to your child and then talk about what you have read.
2. **Be a writing role model.** Let your child see you writing when possible – letters, work assignments, letters to the editor, email. Help your child to understand about writing for different purposes like short stories, poems, letters, etc. Make sure they see all different types of materials such as books, magazines, newspapers, comic books and illustrated novels.
3. **Get children to write on their own.** Capturing the day's events on paper or creating a story or poem is a great way for children to develop their own writing style. Let them write about their interests – it doesn't matter what the subject is.
4. **Encourage your child to write down ideas.** A journal or diary is a simple way for kids to keep track of their thoughts or feelings. They can write about things that happened at school, on TV, news stories, pictures, sports, and activities. Journals can be purchased at the dollar store in a variety of sizes with different covers. Or for a special occasion, get one with a lock for private thoughts.
5. **Keep writing sessions short.** When your child has a writing assignment, help to schedule brief periods of writing rather than trying to write it in one go. Help create an outline before putting pen to paper.
6. **Cyberspace writing.** Encourage your children to write emails to or instant-message with family and friends. If they have their own email address, write emails to each other.
7. **Computers can be a writer's best friend.** Though we all feel that kids may spend too much time on the computer, there are some great games that help kids develop their writing skills by allowing them to create their own stories and books. Look for "parent approved" on the packaging in stores and in the library.
8. **Encourage your child to talk it out.** Writing mistakes can often be easily caught by reading stories out loud.
9. **Listen and talk to your children.** Help your child talk about what, where, when, how and why as they are preparing to write about something. If your child seems stuck, ask what the problem is and talk about it.
10. **Play games and do puzzles with your child.** Games such as *Junior Scrabble®*, word finders or crossword puzzles that involve creating and using words are a great way to develop word vocabulary. Keep a dictionary handy.



10 Tips to help your child with homework

Homework is an important part of learning. When you support your children's homework routine, you can help them do better at school. Here are some simple tips to help get the most out of their homework.

1. **A routine is good.** Homework can be habit forming and that's good news for you and your child. Work out a homework schedule and make sure children adhere to it. It won't be long before homework is complete without your getting involved.
2. **Give space for homework.** Distractions and homework don't mix. So do your best to create a bright and quiet space where your child can concentrate on schoolwork. Make sure it's away from distractions like TV, music and loud siblings.
3. **Practice makes perfect.** Repetition reinforces learning. That's why it's helpful to have kids practice reading, writing and math with you every day. Ten to 15 minutes a day can work wonders, whether reading a favourite book together, or helping measure ingredients in the kitchen.
4. **"How was your day?"** Every school day is an adventure. Kids will do and learn so much they'll be bursting to tell someone all about it. So take a few moments every day to chat about the school day—and be a good listener.
5. **Check in occasionally.** When kids do their homework all alone, their concentration can often wander. Check in once in a while and see how it's going. Ask if there are any questions. Sometimes kids just need to talk about a homework problem to figure out the answer.
6. **Turn everyday activities into homework.** Teachers give homework and so can you. Include children in everyday tasks and assign activities such as searching newspapers, reading recipes, creating shopping lists, plotting out routes on a map, etc. Small activities can often teach big lessons.
7. **Make kids proud of their effort.** Getting the answers right is important, but it's only part of what homework is all about. Doing a thorough and neat job is important, too. Make it a habit to sit down and go over completed homework. Look at it together for thoroughness and overall quality of work. Always look for something positive.
8. **Motivate with applause.** "Hey, you did a great job". Words like these have an amazing effect on children. Encouragement gives them confidence and makes them feel good about doing their best. At the end of every homework session, try letting your son or daughter know that you appreciate and admire the effort.
9. **Encourage curiosity and questions.** Learning really begins when kids start asking questions. Who, what, where, when and why are magical words of discovery that make learning more interesting and fun. Give your children the confidence to ask for help if the homework is difficult or confusing.
10. **Know what's going on at school.** Unfortunately, kids don't always tell parents everything. Make a point of staying in touch with teachers, especially if you have a question or concern. Let teachers know they can always call you if there is a problem.



10 tips to get your child ready for school

Starting school is an important step in your son's or daughter's life—and yours. It's a big change. It's exciting. It's even a little scary. Here are 10 tips that will help you get your child ready for that first day of school.

1. **Get familiar with the school.** Before the first day of school, visit the school with your child so that the route, the building, and school surroundings become familiar.
2. **Start the routine early.** About a week or so before the start of school, begin putting your child to bed at a normal time for a school night. For a week before school starts, be sure your child then gets up, dressed, and fed like a regular school morning.
3. **Practise sharing.** Give your child all kinds of opportunities to be with other kids, to learn to share, wait, and take turns. That's what school is all about.
4. **Children should dress themselves.** You won't be at school to help your child get ready for the outdoors. Encourage children to practise at home putting on and taking off their own jacket, snowpants, boots, etc.
5. **Dress your child accordingly.** Your child is going to be active at school. Choose clothes and shoes that are comfortable and durable. Give your child outdoor clothing for all types of weather.
6. **Teach the importance of listening.** School means being able to listen. Kids need to understand and practise listening, things like: look at who is talking, don't interrupt, and think about what is being said.
7. **Learn at home.** Include learning in your child's everyday life. For example, a child can practise by reading package labels or weighing produce while shopping. Read to your child. Play word or counting games.
8. **Develop young muscles.** Give your child every opportunity to exercise and develop larger muscles by running, climbing, playing with a ball, etc. Smaller hand muscles can be strengthened with *Play-Dough*®, pencils, and crayons.
9. **Set "at home" ground rules.** Figure out priorities for after-school activities, homework, chores, TV time, and video games before the first day of school. This will allow you to agree on a schedule and avoid confrontation later on.
10. **Encourage questions.** Give your child the confidence to ask questions in all situations. Let your child know that it's OK to tell the teacher if something is hard to understand.



10 tips to help your son with reading

Research demonstrates that boys as a group are lagging in reading and writing skills. If your son is having difficulty, he may need different approaches to encourage interest in reading. Here are 10 simple tips you can use at home to improve your son's literacy skills.

1. **It takes time to build confidence and skill.** It's not how hard the book is that counts, it's the amount of reading that matters. Let your son choose the books he wants to read, even if it's below his reading level. This will help him feel better about his reading skills and give him confidence to try more challenging material.
2. **Let him make his own choices.** If it's his choice, then he'll want to read it. Don't worry if he chooses the same types of books to read over and over or if they have edgy humour. Remind yourself that he's actually reading and enjoying it.
3. **Everybody enjoys a good story, so read to him.** If your son finds a story interesting but the book too hard, share the reading. This will also make the book more fun to read.
4. **Be a role model.** Make sure your son sees you reading and writing. If he sees you doing it, he'll respect you and the activity more.
5. **Challenge his mind in other ways.** Reading and writing are only a couple of ways to challenge your son's mind. Spend time with him and share some brain teasing games like chess, crossword puzzles, board games – even video games. An active mind is better prepared for reading.
6. **Give his teacher a call.** Next to you, his teacher knows him best. Talk to your son's teacher for updates on his reading and writing. Discuss ways that you can help encourage your boy's literacy skills.
7. **Have him read all sorts of material.** There's much more to read than just books. Try reading the instructions to a model airplane or new video game. It's all reading and it's all good practice.
8. **Tap into your son's hobbies and interests.** Turn his interest in sports and music into a reason for reading. Give him books and magazines about things that he already finds fun and interesting and he'll soon discover that reading can be interesting too.
9. **Use the Net.** Just because it's on a computer screen doesn't mean it's not reading. The Internet is loaded with great sites and games that are perfect for your son. Let his interests be his guide to the sites he'll want to read. Exchanging emails with friends and family is also a great way to practise writing. Just be sure he knows all about Internet safety and that the parental controls are on.
10. **Make his day with a positive word.** A pat on the back, school work on the fridge, a smile and the words "good going"... these are gestures that will motivate your son to love reading and writing. So whenever your son finishes a reading or writing assignment, has read a new book or written a story, show genuine interest in it and tell him you're proud.



10 tips to help you when talking to the teacher

The parent/teacher meeting is an important time to share ideas and information with your child's teacher. You can also discuss ways to help your child develop strengths and overcome challenges. These 10 tips will help you get the most out of your time with the teacher. Remember: at many parent/teacher meetings, your time will be limited.

1. **Be prepared.** Before meeting the teacher, think about what you want to know and understand about your child's school experience. Review the report card and write down key questions you want to ask.
2. **Ask yourself questions.** Focus on what you want to get out of your parent/teacher meeting by asking yourself questions. For example, "What methods are being used to teach my child?" or "What can I do to get involved in my child's learning?"
3. **Talk to your child before.** Ask your children what they think they are good at and what needs improving. Let them tell you how they feel about school, the teacher and getting along with others.
4. **Arrive ready.** Be sure you come to the parent/teacher meeting in a positive frame of mind and with all the materials you need. Bring the questions you prepared in advance along with your child's report card.
5. **Relax and feel confident.** You know your child best and want what's best. Remember, the teacher also wants your child to be successful.
6. **Be clear about what's being said.** If you need clarification or have concerns about an answer the teacher gives, ask the teacher to explain it further. Don't be satisfied until you fully understand.
7. **Think about what was discussed.** Take some time to think about what you and the teacher talked about. If you are still unclear about something or want to ask more questions, don't be afraid to call the teacher to talk further.
8. **Follow-up at home.** Talk with your child after you have met with the teacher. Discuss what was talked about in the meeting, focusing on the positive and how to achieve the goals that you set.
9. **Keep a log or journal.** Write down the actions you take and any observations about your child. This is important information that can be shared with the teacher at the next meeting.
10. **Arrange the next meeting.** Set a date when you will call the teacher for an update on your child's progress or to arrange another meeting.



10 tips that use arts and crafts to develop math and literacy skills

Art fosters a child's imagination. It can encourage problem solving and critical thinking. Look for opportunities to help your children develop literacy, thinking and math skills while they enjoy creating their art work.

1. **Offer a wide range of art experiences.** When kids can explore different kinds of materials, they gain a sense of pride that is reflected in their creativity. Art stimulates learning, and plays an important role in developing their communication and thinking skills.
2. **Organize different art materials and then let your kids explore them.** Encourage your kids to tell you what they like or don't like about certain materials. Art helps develop decision-making skills and fosters imagination.
3. **Gear art activities to your child's age and level of development.** It takes time for children to build skills and confidence, so offer them encouragement.
4. **Let your kids make their own choices.** Art is a way for kids to express their feelings. Keep the activity unstructured. For example, if your kids talk about painting a snowman let them decide what it should look like. Encourage them to talk about their choices, without judging their decisions.
5. **Encourage your kids to explore interesting materials.** These could include leaves, pine cones, egg boxes, cereal boxes, straws, wrapping paper, etc. Kids can count them, divide them into equal piles or match them by colour. All of these activities build math and literacy skills.
6. **Talk to your kids about what they are doing, rather than asking them to interpret the art.** Ask about the different colours, textures and shapes of the materials. For example, ask "What does this painting make you think of?", or "I wonder what will happen if we mix the red and blue paint together?"
7. **New activities are great vocabulary builders:** Introduce new words like "drizzle the glue", "dab the paint" or "sprinkle the sparkles". Keep a dictionary close by to point out the words.
8. **Point out art in the everyday environment.** For example, talk about the shapes and textures in the playground. Ask questions like, "How many triangles can you count in the playground?". Talk about the different colours of the leaves. Make a game out of estimating quantity. For example, ask them to guess whether there are more red or yellow leaves in a certain area.
9. **Encourage questions.** Giving kids the confidence to ask questions lets them expand their knowledge and understanding of art. Use their questions to introduce new words into their vocabulary.
10. **Provide an area to display your child's work that so it can be enjoyed by family and friends.** Children enjoy seeing themselves as artists. Be sure to date the artwork, so that you can talk about work done "6 weeks ago" and they learn about time and calendars.



5 tips to help choose books for your child

Here are some tips to help you choose books that will keep your children enthusiastic about reading.

1. **Select books that match your children's skill level**

The *Five Finger Rule* can help you find out if a book is easy, just right or too hard. Ask your children to hold up a finger for every word they do not understand on a page. If there are more than 4 or 5 words on a page they do not know, the book is probably too hard and may prove frustrating. Try suggesting another book or reading the book together.

2. **Rhymes, repetition, humour and pictures**

Younger children enjoy books that use word repetition, rhymes and familiar words. Most children also like books that are funny. Look for books with colourful pictures and simple words.

3. **Use books to learn about life events**

Reading books about events affecting your children's lives (new brother or sister, moving, new school) can help them deal with fears and feelings. Choose books that relate to what's happening in your family.

4. **Find favourite authors and popular books**

If your child has a favourite book, try to find other books written by the same author. Ask friends, family, and teachers what books their children have enjoyed and try a book swap. The children's librarian at your local library can also be a great source for popular book suggestions.

5. **Read languages other than English or French**

Any kind of reading can help your children develop their skills, so encourage them to read books in languages besides English. If your children know how to read in their first language, they will find it easier to learn English.



5 Tips for sharing family stories

1. **Bring your child into the story**

Choose stories about interesting things that happened to you or to members of your family, including your child. Include your child in the storytelling by making links to him/her. For example, “You know how you like to ride your bike? Well this story is about a time when I was your age and I rode my bike to get bread for dinner...”

2. **What kind of story to tell**

Stories do not have to have a clear beginning, middle and end with a problem and solution. They could simply describe an event that happened. Try to keep the stories brief and simple, especially for younger ones. Children’s attention spans become longer as they get older.

3. **Bring in all five senses**

Use words that will relate to your child’s five senses – sight, hearing, touch, smell and taste. These words help to bring the story to life and make it more real for your child. Use physical gestures like hand movements to show action, and facial expressions to show emotion.

4. **Introduce new words**

Including one or two new words will add detail to the story and help expand your child’s vocabulary. These could be words that relate to the story that help to paint a better picture in your child’s mind, e.g. invitation, guests, celebration, etc.

5. **Tell stories anytime**

Share family stories throughout the day –it doesn’t have to happen only at bedtime. You could tell stories at meal time, on walks through the community, while riding on a bus or subway, while driving in a car or waiting for appointments.

Safe Schools

Exerpt from Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board Safe Schools Guide

Internet Safety Resources for Parents and Children

The Internet is a valuable and beneficial tool that has become widely accessible to people of all ages. The vast array of information and services available on the Internet is staggering. However, as with any activity, Internet use has certain risks. We need to be aware of the risks in order to help our children use the Internet properly and safely.

The following links will guide you to some tips to help you encourage safe Internet use in your home.

Kids in the Know

Internet Safety Guides for Parents

Cybertip.ca

Cybertip.ca is Canada's National Tipline for reporting the online sexual exploitation of children.

- Children and Child Development
- Children's Online Interests
- Chat Lingo
- How to Get Involved
- Internet Safety Guidelines
- Risks for Children on the Internet

Media Awareness Network

Media and Internet Education Resources for Parents

Parenting the Net Generation Workshop

Parents can work together to ensure kids are safe and savvy surfers by organizing a Parenting the Net Generation workshop at their school.

Be Web Aware

For more ideas on how to build partnerships in your community to raise awareness about kids' Internet use, check out Be Web Aware, our public education program on Internet safety.

Educational Games for Kids

Privacy Playground

Cybersense and Nonsense

Get Net Wise

- Online Safety Guide
- Tools for Families
- Websites for Kids
- Reporting Trouble

Net Lingo

Top 50 Internet Acronyms Every Parent Needs to Know

National Centre for Missing and Exploited Children

NetSmartzKids.org

NetSmartz has developed Internet safety presentations for use with children of all ages and adults. Educate parents and communities with slides detailing online risks, statistics, resources, and tips for keeping children safer online. Encourage tweens and teens to examine their online behavior and take steps to prevent victimization of themselves and others. Teach younger children what to watch out for on the Internet and how to avoid these risks.

NSTeens.org

Comic-book-style characters address social networking and cyberbullying through animation, videos, and webcomics. Can these friends help each other make the right decisions online and in the real world? Get safety tips, educational resources, and more!

Peel Regional Police

Computer & Internet Safety

Cyberproofed? is an internet safety program designed to give students the necessary tools to help protect themselves from being victimized by predators on the Internet.

Ministry of Education Safe Schools

Online Respect and Responsibility

Video footage of the first-ever student forum held to generate discussion and gather insights on how students are using the Internet, cell phones and other online technologies.

Canadian Living.com

Keeping your child safe on the web (PDF)

Ontario Provincial Police

Internet Safety Tips for Parents (PDF)

www.connect2ENDviolence.ca is a joint initiative of the Dufferin Peel Catholic District School Board, the Regional Municipality of Peel Police Services, Peel Regional Police, the Region of Peel and the Peel District School Board. The website provides information, surveys, blogs and links on such topics as:

- Bullying
- Child Abuse
- Community Safety
- Computer Safety
- Cyberbullying
- Diversity
- Domestic abuse
- Gang violence

www.connect2ENDviolence.ca is an interactive website that was developed as part of the region's response to the escalating number of violent crimes occurring in the Region. The website utilizes surveys and blogs to obtain input from visitors and has an "ideas" webpage that provides information on what citizens in the community are doing to reduce violence and to increase community safety.

Parent Tip Sheet - Internet Safety

Insert sheet from Board

We hope this reference booklet helps guide you and your children while at St. Dominic School.

If you have any questions about the content, please contact the Principal or your Parent Council. They will be pleased to help you.

A solid partnership between parents, teachers, students and the parish will enhance the educational experience of your child.

This reference booklet was made possible through PRO (Parents Reaching Out) Grant from the Ontario Ministry of Education in 2010. The grants are provided through annual application from School Councils. The intention and use of these funds is to support school based initiatives. They are designed to inform and engage parents in their children's education.

"The great thing in this world is not so much where we stand,
but in what direction we are moving."

Oliver Wendall Holmes