

# Your child's future begins today.

Are you doing what it takes to set your child up for lifelong success?



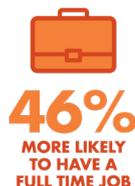
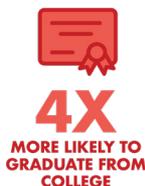
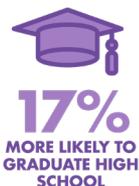
[muncieby5.org/today](https://muncieby5.org/today)



## Ready for Kindergarten. Set for life.

Kindergarten-readiness is the first step toward lifelong success. Children who are ready for Kindergarten by age 5 are 17% more likely to graduate from high school, 4 times more likely to graduate from college, 46% more likely to have a full-time job, and 20% more likely to earn a strong salary by age 40.

### CHILDREN WHO ARE READY FOR KINDERGARTEN BY AGE 5 ARE:



By focusing on creating the strongest possible foundation now, you will create a pipeline of opportunities that your child will have for the rest of their lives.

### So what can you do today to set your child up for success?

#### Read

Reading aloud to your child builds their speaking skills, vocabulary, and literacy skills.

#### Talk

Talking to your baby is crucial for brain development, even before they can understand you.

#### Count

Count aloud to your child to develop early math skills and to teach them the meaning of numbers.

#### Model

You are your child's first teacher. Be a role model for good behavior.

#### Sing

Develop stronger language skills in your child by teaching them simple songs.

#### Play

Stimulate your child's creativity and imagination by giving them time to play each day.

#### Explore

Build courage in your child by going on adventures and encouraging them to try new things.

Learn more at [muncieby5.org/today](https://muncieby5.org/today).

## What can you do to help your child learn and grow BY BIRTH?

- Respond to your baby's needs quickly. It helps them understand that they can trust the world around them.
- Talk with your baby about everything you are doing. The more you talk with them, the more they will be learning.
- Read books to them. Point out pictures, and make up stories about them. When they are older, let them flip the pages.
- Provide consistent routines for your baby. Bedtime, bath time, and feeding time are great opportunities to begin routines.
- Limit exposure to "screen time." Babies need to interact with real people, not TVs or tablets.
- Provide a safe sleep environment for your baby in their own crib or Pack 'n Play. The space should be free from blankets, bumper pads, and stuffed animals. Put your child to sleep on their back.
- Request a Developmental Screening from your physician when your baby is 9 months old.
- Limit background noises when interacting with your baby. Radio or TV can interrupt your baby's ability to focus on you.
- Provide lots of opportunities for safe exploration on the ground. Babies need time to build their muscles.



## What can you do to help your child learn and grow **BY 1?**

- Read to your toddler. Many times, parents think that because a toddler quickly turns the pages of a book, or even drops it, they are not interested in reading. Keep reading and pointing out pictures; your toddler is learning so much during these interactions.
- Toddlers' physical abilities grow significantly during the year they are one. Give them safe opportunities to practice those skills by walking, running, and climbing.
- In order for toddlers to learn, they have to practice a skill many times. Give them a chance to practice. By 18 months, your toddler should be able to begin drinking small amounts of fluids from a cup (without a lid), with only a small amount of spilling. Many parents don't like the mess of a cup without a lid but a toddler needs to practice drinking from a cup without a lid to learn how to do it. Give them a cup when they are seated in a high chair or at a table.
- Keep background noise to a minimum. Turn your TV at home and music in the car down or off so you can talk with your child about what is going on around them. The background noises make it hard for your child to focus on your words.
- You are the most important person in your child's life. Be sure to take care of yourself to be the best parent you can be. Children can be affected by stress in their environments from a very young age. Try to create a low-stress environment for the family.



## What can you do to help your child learn and grow **BY 2?**

- Build your child's vocabulary using pictures, picture books, storytelling, dramatic play, etc.
- Allow for outdoor play opportunities that involve running, climbing, and jumping.
- Provide your child with time to play with friends through arranged play dates, preschool, or childcare.
- Limit your child's screen time exposure.
- Encourage imaginative play/dramatic play. For example, encourage your child to walk like a cat, or create a place where they can create their own play.
- Allow your child to ask questions, and provide answers that don't leave them wondering. Be direct when answering their question so that they are not questioning the truth behind it later on.



## What can you do to help your child learn and grow **BY 3?**

- Provide your child with new words to expand their vocabulary.
- Avoid baby-talk. Speak to them as you would an adult.
- Let your child know that you are proud of their newfound independence and imagination.
- Give your child choices (2-3) in order to make decisions.
- Allow your child to help with chores.

## What can you do to help your child learn and grow **BY 4?**

- Acknowledge your child's feelings, but be firm in the rules you set.
- Reinforce positive actions and interactions, such as playing nicely with a friend.
- Practice numbers and letters, such as teaching them a poem to recite.
- Allow your child to learn self-help skills, such as serving their own food and drinks and feeding themselves.
- Model appropriate behaviors through pretend play.



## What can you do to help your child learn and grow **BY 5?**

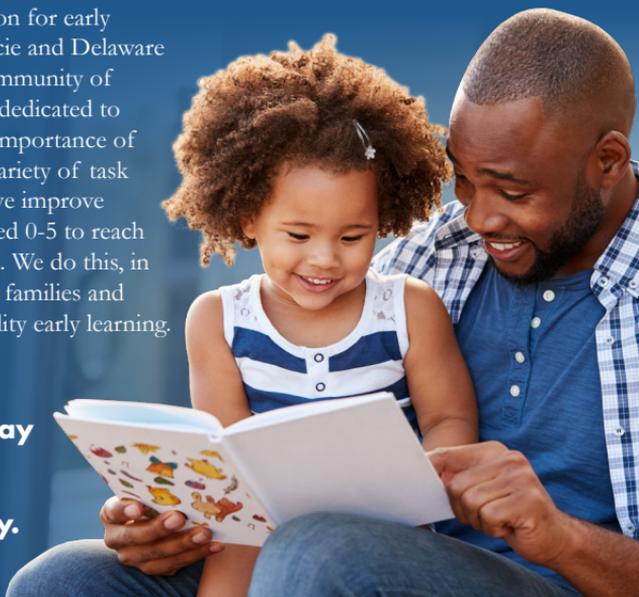


### Make sure your child is Kindergarten-ready with this list of essential skills:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Watches & listens to stories to completion        | <input type="checkbox"/> Identifies rhyming words  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stays on task during adult-directed activities    | <input type="checkbox"/> Identifies beginning sounds in words                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sees a simple task to completion                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Identifies at least 13 letters of the alphabet                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gives name, age, and gender upon request          | <input type="checkbox"/> Completes basic responsibilities related to daily needs                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Identifies 5 colors                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Follows basic health and safety rules                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Counts 5 objects, using one-to-one correspondence | <input type="checkbox"/> Accepts guidance and directions from familiar adults                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asks for help                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Follows daily routines and classroom rules                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communicates needs and wants                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Follows directions and responds to limits set by teacher                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Understands and follows directions                | <input type="checkbox"/> Controls feelings of frustration, distress, and anxiety when challenged |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Listens to gather information                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Resolves conflicts in socially acceptable ways                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Uses speech that is understandable                |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recognizes own name in isolated print             |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Copies or writes own name                         |  |

BY5 is the leading organization for early childhood awareness in Muncie and Delaware County, Indiana. We are a community of professionals and volunteers dedicated to improving awareness of the importance of early childhood. Through a variety of task force and volunteer efforts, we improve opportunities for children aged 0-5 to reach their developmental potential. We do this, in part, by providing support to families and increasing access to high-quality early learning.

**Learn more about  
what you can do today  
to set your child up  
for future success at  
[muncieby5.org/today](http://muncieby5.org/today).**



BY5 Early Childhood Initiative, Inc.  
201 E. Jackson St., Suite 400  
Muncie, IN 47305