

LIFE SKILLS FOR PRE-SCHOOLERS

ACTIVITY GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS



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Life Skills for Pre-Schoolers: Activity Guide for Educators©

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Disclaimer:

The intent of this guide is to suggest themes, topics and activities related to life skills education for children that can be implemented by educators to increase learning in the early years. The author assumes no responsibility for the implementation of the suggested themes, topics and activities for children by educators and/or other persons, and any immediate and future learning and other results that transpire from the use of the book.

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Foreword

Between birth and the age of six to eight years, brain growth and cognitive development in children is extremely rapid. During this period an enormous amount of learning is taking place and children are developing their individual knowledge base.

This knowledge base is social and sets the base of competence and coping skills for the later stages of life. It relates to what is important to children, that is, themselves, their family group, their friends, their community and their environment. It assists the development of foundation life skills.

Foundation life skills are based on universal social concepts which enable children to develop a positive awareness and concept of themselves and an acceptance that they are important and of value.

They include core concepts, attitudes, values and beliefs that will influence how children feel, think, behave and survive as younger and older children, youth and adults. They assist the development of positive attitudes about themselves as a human being, appropriate relationships with other people in their family group and community including their friends, and an understanding of how they relate to other things in their world.

Life skills education is important for young children and can be planned and implemented in a home, full day and family day care, crèche and occasional care, playgroups and similar programs by parents, caregivers and childcare practitioners. *Life Skills for Pre-Schoolers: Activity Guide for Educators* is designed for this purpose.

It complements a separate guide, *Life Skills for Pre-Schoolers: Curriculum Guide for Teachers*. This guide is for use in kindergartens, pre-schools, pre-primary centres and similar settings before the start of formal schooling in Year 1 of primary school.

About the Author

Isabelle Adams is a qualified and experienced teacher, education administrator, researcher, evaluator, trainer and consultant whose involvement in the early childhood education industry spans four decades. She is an accredited trainer and facilitator of adult learning and a professional speaker.

She worked in early childhood education as a pre-school, transition and pre-primary teacher, pre-school officer, pre-primary advisory teacher, curriculum officer, researcher, program evaluator, superintendent, and lecturer and now works as an independent consultant and trainer. She has extensive knowledge and experience of culturally, linguistically and socio-economically diverse children and families.

Isabelle co-authored the original best-selling curriculum resource for early childhood educators entitled *A Self-Concept Curriculum for Young Children*. She has written research reports and academic papers on early childhood education for publications produced by state, national and international organizations and held membership on state and national committees as an early childhood educationalist. She presented papers and workshops on early childhood education and services at state and national conferences in Australia and international conferences in other countries.

As an independent education consultant, she conducted research on early literacy and numeracy for the Australian Council of Educational Research, coordinated conferences on early childhood services, designed and facilitated programs for parents and caregivers on early learning for young children, and carried out consultations and developed strategies for early childhood education and care.

Isabelle is a mother and grand-mother and a strong advocate of the rights of all children to be treated as unique individuals who are valued, respected and loved unconditionally by their families and other people who are significant to them and to have relevant and practical learning that makes sense to them, develops their life skills and prepares them for transition into and learning success in the first years of formal schooling.

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FORUMLA FOR SUCCESS IN EARLY LEARNING©

Effective Educators	Appropriate Learning Environment
Children's Active Participation	Relevant Learning Content

LIST OF THEMES

- A.** Children Are People
- B.** Children Have Bodies
- C.** Children Use Their Senses
- D.** Children Have Feelings
- E.** Children Have Physical Needs
- F.** Children Have Families
- G.** Children Live In Homes
- H.** Children Have Friends
- I.** Children Live In A Community
- J.** Children Visit Places
- K.** Children Can Travel
- L.** Children Have Many Things In Their World

LIST OF INSTRUCTIONS FOR THEME ACTIVITIES

<u>Theme</u>	<u>Instruction</u>	<u>Page No</u>
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A. CHILDREN ARE PEOPLE

Literacy

- Talk with individual children about their identity as a person and child and focus on their name, gender, age, birthdate, birthplace, nationality and language. These details can be written on a page of A4 white paper with a separate photo of each child to make a *My Identity* poster. This can be displayed where children can see and read it, and talk with others about it.
- Print individual children's name on a piece of paper or cardboard, put it under a photo of them somewhere in the house or centre where it can be seen and read constantly by you and children e.g. on a door or wall.
- Make an album of individual children using photos of them from babyhood to their present age. Go through their album with each child and talk with them about what they are doing, whom they are with, and what age they are in each photo.
- Make storybooks with children about children, using photos or pictures from magazines, which can be glued into scrapbooks. Print a short description of children underneath the photo/picture.
- Play a game of *Hide and Seek* with children using their name e.g.
Where is Molly? There she is!
- Read books and tell stories to children about people, particularly children of their own ages and what they do – select from *Stories* section.
- Read poems to children about people – select from *Poems* section.

Numeracy

- Provide toy replicas of people for children to play with using their imagination. Explain to them that replicas of people are 'pretend' and not real people e.g.
 - boy/girl dolls,
 - duplo people,
 - plastic people sets
- Use toy models of people to help children:
 - count 1 to 5
 - identify different colours e.g. *Which people are red? blue? yellow?*
 - identify gender e.g. *Which person is a girl? A boy?*
 - identify age e.g. *Which person is a child? An adult?*
 - compare size e.g. *Which people are big? small, tall, short, wide, or thin?*
 - classify e.g. Can you put all the red people together? Children together?
- At family or group gatherings play a game with children of identifying people using attributes e.g. ask children to count the number of people who are children, adults, babies, boys, girls, men and women.

- When you are out with children talk with them about the people you see and meet e.g.

How many men and women did we meet?

Where were children we saw?

How many boys and girls can you see?

- When visiting other people you know, identify and name them for children e.g.

Mrs Adams is a woman.

She is Jade's Mummy.

Jade is her daughter.

Jade is a girl.

Art and Craft

- Make *A Poster about People* with children by cutting out magazine pictures of people from different groups, e.g. babies, children, teenagers, and adults.
- Help children to glue the pictures on a large piece of paper or cardboard (A3 size) to make a poster, leaving some space for the title of the poster e.g. *A Poster about People*.
- When dry, display the poster where children can see it. Encourage children to talk about the poster and how it was made, and to read the poster title.
- Provide children with blank A4 white paper and coloured markers and ask them to draw a picture of him/herself and other people e.g. child, adult, boy, girl, man, woman.
- Encourage children to draw the features of the people such as body, arms, hands, fingers, legs, feet, toes, head, neck, eyes, eyebrows, nose, mouth, ears, etc.
- When children are finished ask children to tell you about the person they drew. Write down exactly what they say under the picture of the person and read the words to them.
- Children may want to draw a picture of each person on a separate page. Repeat the process for each picture.
- The pictures can be stapled together with a cover page entitled *A Book about People* by (children's name). You can read to children the words written about each picture.

Music and Movement

- Change words of well-known songs to make them 'people' songs to sing with children

You're a little person, yes it's true

Your name is Molly, and I love you.

Tune: *I'm a Little Teapot* Merrily, Merrily, p.69

- Sing or chant songs with children about people that they have heard on television programs e.g.

One of these People is not Like the Other Sesame Street

- Sing or chant songs with individual children about themselves– select from *Songs* section.

Physical Play and Outings

- Encourage children to walk, run, jump and generally move around using their whole bodies without restriction each day.
- Take children to a park or an open space (if play space is limited) for physical play or ensure adequate space is provided without furniture inside if security for children is an issue.
- Introduce circle games to children incorporating basic physical skills e.g.–
Look who it is in the Middle of the Circle - see Songs section

Science

- Observe and talk with children using real people or pictures, the difference in physical appearance between babies and toddlers, children and teenagers, and older and younger adults.
- Observe and talk with children using dolls or pictures, the differences between male and female persons.
- Observe and talk with children about their shadow e.g.
When can we see our shadow?
How much space does our shadow take up?
Is our shadow the same size as our body?

STORIES

Happy Birthday Sam
What is a Birthday Child
Today I am a Crocodile
I'm Glad to be Me
On the Night You were Born
Itsy-Bitsy Babies
Just Jack
The Three Questions
I Love Birthdays
Spot's Birthday Balloon

Pat Hutchins
Ruth Jaynes
Jane Bottomley
P K Hallinan
Nancy Tillman
Margaret Wild
Jane Tanner
John J Muth
Anne Walker
Eric Hill

SONGS

Look who it is in the middle of the circle?
Tune: *Punchinello*
(Say Child's Name and everyone copy their movements)

Merrily, Merrily p.51

Did You Ever See A Lassie
(Substitute "Lassie" for person, man, woman, girl, boy)

Merrily, Merrily, p.52

Comes a Birthday

Merrily, Merrily, p.87

What Do You Think My Name Is

The New Useful Book, p.6

Peek-A-Boo

The New Useful Book, p.40

Everybody Do This

The New Useful Book, p.46

POEMS

A1 People are Human Beings

People are human beings
Who live on Planet Earth.
They come into this world alone
On the day of their birth.

They are born as babies
Who grow up very fast.
And before they know it
Their childhood has gone past.

Grown up people are adults
Some are young and some are old.
Children are babies and toddlers
Who adults like to hold.

Human beings are people
So are you and I too.
We are not like animals
Who live in a zoo.

A2 I'm a Human Being

I'm a person not an animal.
I can do so many things.
I can think and talk and listen.
And I can also sing.

I can make all animal sounds.
I think I'm very smart.
A pig can only go oink, oink.
A dog can only bark.

I can quack just like a duck.
I am clever as can be.
A cat can go meow, meow.
But it cannot talk like me.

I'm a special human being
A person and a child.
An animal is now what I am
If I was, I could be wild.

A3 Children are People

Children are people too
Yes we are!
We live in towns and cities
Near and far!

Children are very clever
We can think!
Some of us are black or white,
Brown or pink!

Children are a gift to have
We give love!
Sometimes when we hurt inside
We will shove!

Children will grow up to be
Adults as well!
And how much they care for us
We can tell!

A4 I'm a Special Person

I'm a special person,
Yes I am.
Here are my fingers,
Here are my hands.

Here are my feet,
And here are my toes.
Here is my mouth
And my ears and my nose.

Here is my hair
And here are my eyes.
Here are my arms
And my legs
And my thighs.

I have a body,
Yes it's true.
I'm a special person,
Just like you.

POEMS

A5 Do You Know?

Do you know that
Children are clever?
Do you know that
Children can think?
Do you know that
Children are precious?
Even when sometimes they stink!

Do you know that
Children can draw?
Do you know that
Children can paint?
Do you know that
Children are creative?
Even though always good they ain't!

Do you know that
Children can feel?
Do you know that
Children can hurt?
Do you know that
Children need protection?
So adults need to be on the alert!

Do you know that
Children can play?
Do you know that
Children can love?
Do you know that
Children need affection?
Rather than being given a shove!

Do you know that
Children are a gift?
Do you know that
Children are sad?
When they are
Not loved and cared for
By their Mum and their Dad!

A6 I Am a Child

I am a child
Who has a name.
I am a child
Who can play a game.

I am a child
Who knows how to talk.
I am a child
Who can also walk.

I am a child
Who has a date of birth.
I am a child
Who can sometimes get hurt.

I am a child
Who likes to have fun.
I am a child
Who can jump and run.

I am a child
Who likes to play.
I am a child
Who wants Mummy to stay.

I am a child
Who can feel and see.
I am a child
Who wants to be me.

SAMPLE ONLY

LIFE SKILLS FOR
PRE-SCHOOLERS
EMPOWER CHILDREN
EDUCATION PROGRAM

Life Skills for Pre-Schoolers: Activity Guide for Educators is a practical guide for educators of children aged 2-5 years that is easy to use. It provides a variety of learning activities that focus on social and “child” related concepts across learning areas for the home and care setting.

The life skills learning program focuses on 12 themes of the *Life Skills for Pre-Schoolers Education Program*.

Each theme has a range of activities in learning areas of Language, Mathematics, Art and Craft, Music and Movement, Physical Play and Outings and Science. Instructions are provided for some of the activities.

The activity guide is designed by Isabelle Adams, an experienced early childhood teacher and professional who has successfully used a life skills curriculum and learning approach in the classroom and as an education focus for teachers and early educators.

