

How the whole family can learn together

Families encourage learning in lots of fun ways, making a big difference to their children's growth and development.

Families can make a big difference by helping children to learn new things, reading and supporting their interests.

There are many ways to support learning at home as well as school. Parents don't need to be experts – supporting and encouraging learning is enough.

- Read together every day
- Write together every day
- Talk together every day
- Learn together every day
- Play together every day
- Laugh together every day
- Move together every day
- Explore together every day



Who is family?

By 'family' we mean all the people who share in the caring and nurturing of a child. Immediate family, like mums, dads, step-parents, foster parents or adopted parents, siblings, and extended family like grandparents, aunts and uncles, and cousins can all have a strong role.

Additionally, 'family' may also be people who are not relatives – people who play a special role in the life of your child, such as a close neighbour or family friend.

What is family-led learning?

Families who spend time doing things together build and encourage their child's positive approach to learning. Families learning together can involve high aspirations for children, reading together, making a good environment for homework, parent-child conversations, plenty of ways to learn at home, and support for social and emotional wellbeing.

Ideas for the whole family to engage in your child's learning

- Read together every day: Picture books with dad before bed, grandma's favourite story on Skype, a traditional family recipe, map and street signs with mum on the way to swimming, an email from grandpa, a text from a friend, a story on an iPad with a sibling.
- Write together every day: A shopping list with mum, a letter to a teacher, an invitation to a friend, a secret message to dad, an envelope to a grandparent, a birthday card to a cousin, a scrap book of a family holiday, a story with a neighbour, record facts with an uncle, draw and colour in with brothers and sisters.

Talk together every day: Talk, talk, talk, and then talk some more. Point things out, ask open questions, ring uncle and talk about the footy, talk about big ideas, passions, interests, favourite food, movies and books with aunty, set the table, sort the recycling, count, conduct internet research with a big brother, knit with grandma, care for a pet, construct a block tower, match shapes and pictures, make a pattern with beads.

Play together every day

Pretend, imagine, play games, construct, build a cubby with dad, dress up with cousins, hide and seek with friends, soccer with the neighbours, experiment with different sensory experiences like sand, water, rocks, and sticks, for sustained periods.

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Laugh together every day

Tell a joke, make up rhymes and riddles, family concerts, watch a funny movie.

Move together every day

Go for a family walk or bike ride, dance, jump on the trampoline, swim, play backyard cricket, plant a vegie patch with dad, swing and climb at the park, play ball games, run, skip.

Go where there's room for children to run, explore and climb safely. Let children try out different sports, and give them an opportunity to play team games – taking turns and learning rules, any opportunity for children to participate with encouragement in contributing to a team will strengthen self-regulation and collaboration.

Explore together

Take grandma to the museum or art gallery, story time at the library with mum, national park adventure with the family, a holiday at the beach, a bus ride to the city to go to the museum and buy an ice-cream, listen to a concert, shop together at the fruit markets, swim at the local pool, camp in the backyard with cousins, fish and chips at the lake.

This fact sheet was adapted from a series developed by the ACT Education and Training Directorate in partnership with the non-profit Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY) and representatives of ACT independent, and Catholic schools and parent organisations. The material in the fact sheets is Creative Commons and is based on international research and consultation with teachers and parents.