



POUDRE  
SCHOOL  
DISTRICT

A GUIDE FOR FAMILIES

# How to Prepare Your Child for Kindergarten

PROVIDED BY POUDRE SCHOOL DISTRICT | [WWW.PSDSCHOOLS.ORG](http://WWW.PSDSCHOOLS.ORG)



# A Message From Superintendent Kingsley

Selecting a school for your child - whether it's your firstborn or the baby of the family - is an important decision. As a parent and an educator with more than a quarter century of experience, I understand the potential anxieties you may have about sending your little one off to school.

I also know that kindergarten is an exciting and important first step on your student's educational journey. In Poudre School District, you'll find students are supported in many ways by caring teachers and staff, a positive

school and classroom culture, as well as a collaborative, safe and welcoming learning environment.

With 33 elementary schools across the district staffed with some of the top early elementary educators around, our kindergarten program gives children a foundation for successful learning.

Explore this guide for tips on how to start kindergarten in PSD. Please let us know if you have any questions, and we hope you and your student will be joining us this fall.

**[PSDSCHOOLS.ORG/KINDER](https://psdschools.org/kinder)**



# About our Poudre School District Community

Although Poudre School District is the eighth-largest school district in Colorado, serving nearly 30,000 students in 54 schools, including five charter schools, we've purposefully created a strong, tight-knit community. This is a community where you and your family belong; where parents are welcome and where children are given all of the resources to flourish in their own ways.

PSD is here to support you and your child as you start on your education adventure.

If you're not already enrolled in PSD, we'd love to welcome your family. Click the link below to register your child today.

**"Teachers and staff put so much energy into meeting kids where they're at and supporting them in every way.**

**They are extremely dedicated to creating a wonderful community culture here, and it is evident the minute you walk into the building. I am just so grateful my kids go to school here."**

**Carolyn Snyder  
Mom of two students at  
Bamford Elementary**

**[ENROLL NOW](#)**

**PSDSCHOOLS.ORG/KINDER**



# Meet our Elementary Schools

## Core Knowledge Schools

- [Bethke Elementary School](#)
- [O’Dea Elementary School](#)
- [Traut Elementary School](#)
- [Zach Elementary School](#)

## Dual Immersion Schools

- [Harris Bilingual Immersion School](#)
- [Irish Elementary Escuela Bilingüe](#)

## International Baccalaureate Schools

- [Bennett Elementary School](#)
- [Cache La Poudre Elementary School](#)
- [Dunn Elementary School](#)
- [McGraw Elementary School](#)
- [Riffenburgh Elementary School](#)

## Leader in Me Schools

- [Lopez Elementary School](#)
- [Rice Elementary School](#)

## Neighborhood Elementary Schools

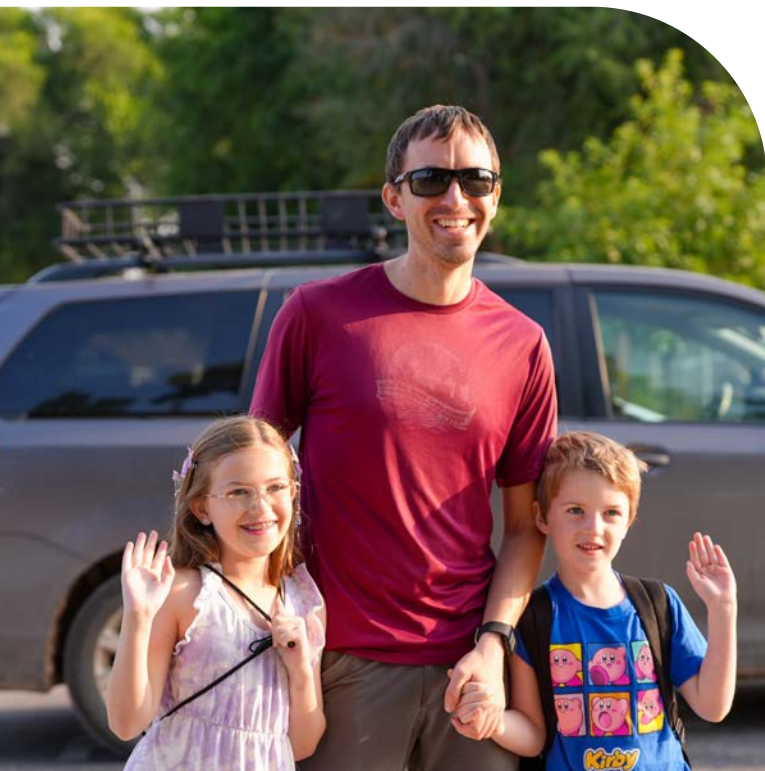
- [Bacon Elementary School](#)
- [Bamford Elementary School](#)
- [Bauder Elementary School](#)
- [Beattie Elementary School](#)
- [Eyestone Elementary School](#)
- [Johnson Elementary School](#)
- [Kruse Elementary School](#)
- [Laurel Elementary School of Arts & Technology](#)
- [Linton Elementary School](#)
- [Livermore Elementary School](#)
- [Olander School for Project-Based Learning](#)
- [Putnam Elementary School](#)
- [Red Feather Lakes Elementary School](#)
- [Stove Prairie Elementary School](#)
- [Timnath Elementary School](#)
- [Werner Elementary School](#)

## STEM/STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Math) Schools

- [Shepardson STEM Elementary School](#)
- [Tavelli Elementary School](#)

## K-12 Schools

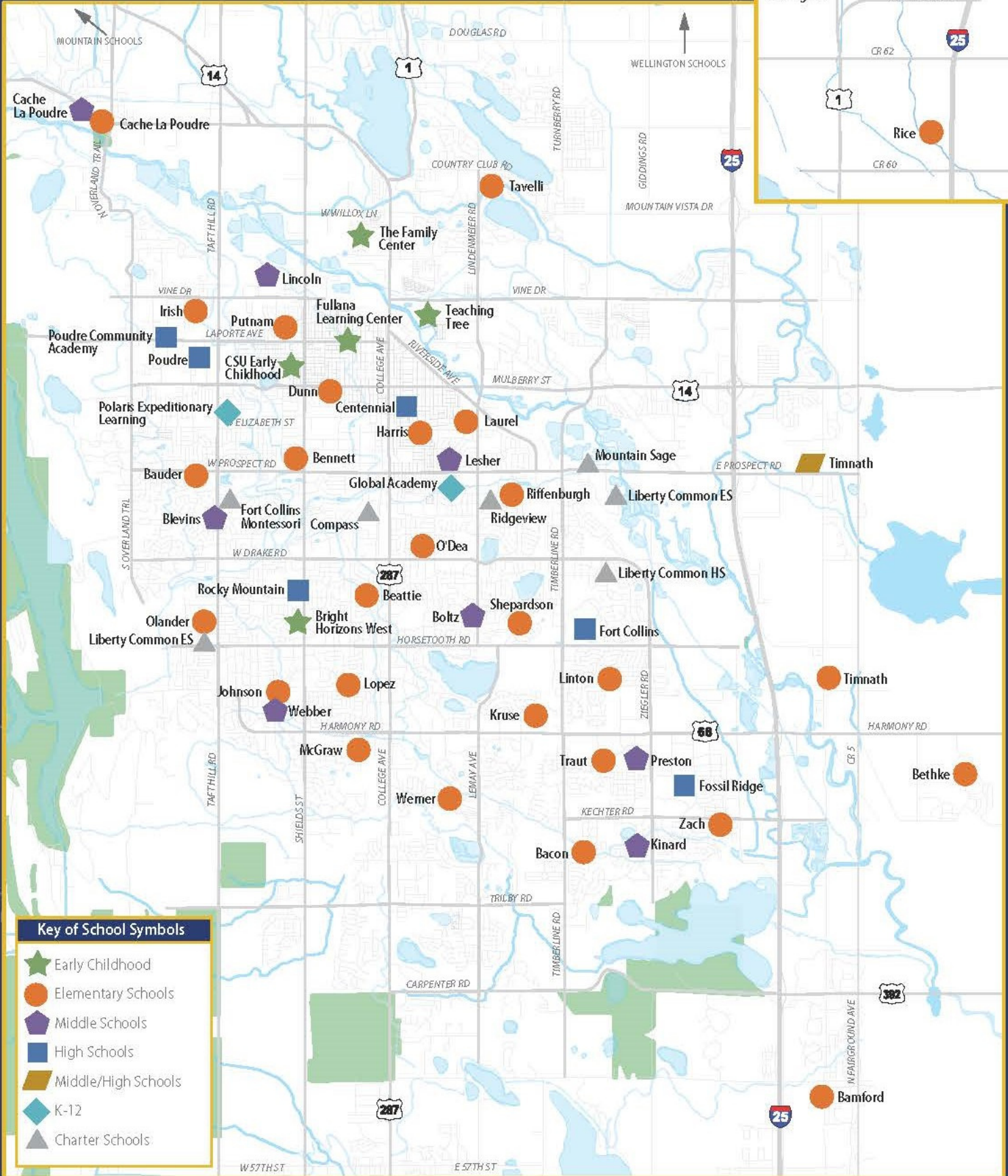
- [Polaris Expeditionary Learning School](#)
- [Poudre Global Academy \(online hybrid\)](#)



**CHECK THE NEXT PAGE FOR A MAP OF PSD SCHOOLS**

# Map of PSD Schools

● Livermore 
 ● Red Feather Lakes 
 ● Stove Prairie



**Key of School Symbols**

- ★ Early Childhood
- Elementary Schools
- ◆ Middle Schools
- High Schools
- ▭ Middle/High Schools
- ◆ K-12
- ▲ Charter Schools

# What kindergarten parents are saying about PSD schools

When asked in a Fall 2023 survey how they felt about their child's experience in PSD, here are just a few of the great things kindergarten parents and guardians had to say.

**Our daughter is thriving and everyone is so thoughtful, supportive, and profoundly excellent at their jobs."**

**"Kindergarten has been a wonderful experience for my son! His teachers and the administrators at his school are amazing, competent, and caring...I have lived in other states and in other parts of Colorado, and PSD is by far one of the best districts."**

**"We've had phenomenal kindergarten for all four of our children. My current kindergartener is our youngest and feels so supported by her teacher and school staff."**

**"PSD in general and the school in specific has been great."**

**"My child is loving kindergarten."**

**"I love everyone I've been in contact with for the past few years. My heart is full of appreciation for everyone at this school."**

**"I am thoroughly impressed with the difference between the education my child is receiving in this district. It is completely different than the education I received as a young child and exceeds the school district in my hometown."**





# FAQs

## ABOUT PSD'S KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

### Where will my child attend kindergarten?

PSD has 33 amazing elementary school programs. You can type in your address at [www.psdschools.org/school-resources/school-locator](http://www.psdschools.org/school-resources/school-locator) to see which school is in your neighborhood or you can learn more about applying for a school choice slot at another PSD school at [www.psdschools.org/schools/school-options-choice](http://www.psdschools.org/schools/school-options-choice).

### What kinds of programs do PSD elementary schools offer?

From bilingual education to Core Knowledge, International Baccalaureate to Leader in Me, STEAM/STEM to traditional neighborhood schools, there's something for every learner in PSD. Learn more at [psdschools.org/schools](http://psdschools.org/schools).

### When can my child start kindergarten?

Children must be 5 years old on or before Oct. 1 of the respective school year to register for kindergarten.

### What are the benefits of kindergarten in PSD?

Kindergarten is a time for your child to establish a love of lifelong learning. Students who attend kindergarten learn social and communication skills, build early literacy and math skills, gain independence, build friendships and hone playing and sharing skills.

### Are meals provided for students?

Yes – Colorado public schools now offer nutritious school meals free of charge for all children, regardless of family income.

### How do I register my child for kindergarten?

Visit [psdschools.org/onlineregistration](http://psdschools.org/onlineregistration) to start the registration process.

# Three Things to Work on With Your Incoming Kindergartener

## 01 Identify SOME letters of the alphabet.

Note that we did not say all letters - just some. Flash cards are great for this exercise (see our printable on the next page).

## Recognize common sight words.

Mastering sight words not only helps students learn to read quickly, it also gives them confidence in their abilities. Start with common sight words such as, "and" and "me." Print and cut out our sight worksheet to help your little one along in this process.

## 02

## 03 Count to 10.

This can be such a fun exercise! Use pom poms, M&Ms or other fun, tactile objects to help your child count out 10.



# Letter Flashcards

Simply print and cut out!

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee

Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj

Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo

Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt

Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy

Zz

# Common Sight Words

Simply print and cut out!

and

me

the

do

said

a

of

you

that

it

is

in

go

no

at

he

she

us



# School-Related Skills

## SOME THINGS TO PRACTICE

1. Read books together
2. Have your student name what they notice on each page
3. Writing first and last name
4. Using a glue stick
5. Holding a pencil
6. Using scissors
7. Go on a shape hunt and have your student point out the shapes they see
8. Using words that describe size (small, smaller, smallest, etc.)
9. Using positional words (up, down, behind, next to, etc.)
10. Go on a number hunt and have your student point out all the numbers they see





# Independent Skills

## SOME THINGS TO PRACTICE

1. Putting on a coat and zipping it up
2. Tying shoelaces
3. Packing up a backpack and wearing it
4. Opening and closing snack and lunch containers
5. Washing hands and using the bathroom independently
6. Discussing how your student will be getting to and from school
7. Ensuring your student can follow basic two-step instructions such as, “Get your lunchbox and put it in your backpack”
8. Hanging up their backpack
9. Sharpening a pencil
10. Opening and filling a water bottle

*\*Your child should be able to do some or most of these things.*



# Counting Down to Kindergarten

Here are some activities to help your child get ready and excited for kindergarten!

## Practice new routines

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, five- and six-year-olds need 10 to 11 hours of sleep each night. Here are some tips to help with the transition:

- Have set wake-up and sleep times each day.
- Lengthen the day without naps - there is no nap time in full-day kindergarten, and your child needs to be prepared for a longer day.
- Drive, walk or ride the new route to school.
- Discuss the new school schedule and expectations for eating, playing, learning and other classroom activities.
- Go to the library to check out children's books that talk about kindergarten ("The Night Before Kindergarten," "Ms. Kindergarten Gets Ready for Kindergarten" and others).

## Consider logistical changes

- Will your child need to leave earlier or later in the morning?
- Will there be a bus? Will you drive or walk to school?
- How will Kindergarten change your family's existing schedule?

## Start a "countdown" calendar to the first day of Kindergarten

Once preschool/daycare is out for the summer, build excitement for the first day of Kindergarten:

- Make a paper chain representing the days until school begins.
- Remove a link each day to make the passage of time real to your child.
- Or, use a calendar and mark off each day with the first day of school highlighted with fun colors, shapes and/or stickers.



# Learning at Home

Children begin learning at home. You and your family are the first people in your child's life to:

- Appreciate who they are
- Encourage curiosity
- Communicate family values
- Establish a strong foundation for learning that lasts a lifetime

**Young children are more likely to thrive in school when they...**

- Know many words
- Can express their ideas and needs

**Spending time talking and playing with your child...**

- Increases their vocabulary
- Makes them feel good about themselves
- Helps them begin school eager and ready to learn

## ACTIVITY BREAK:

### Once Upon a Time

You can help your children learn to express themselves and communicate.

This is a simple and fun activity that you can do anytime, anywhere. Young children are still captivated by storytime, so try one of these:

- Tell a story about yourself when you were their age
- Talk about your grandparents and some of the things you would do with them when you were a child
- Ask your child to tell you a story
- Have a joke-telling contest to see how hard you can make each other laugh!



# Additional Activities

Here are some fun things you and your child can do together.

## ACTIVITY BREAK:

### I Spy

You can play this anywhere: while shopping, driving or reading the newspaper.

- Pick a letter from your child's name and see if you can find it.
- Pick a color and see if you can find an object in that same color.
- Pick a number and have your child find that many items.

## ACTIVITY BREAK:

### Draw or Write

Drawing and scribbling are the beginning stages of writing. Drawing helps develop fine motor skills and imagination, and it's fun for children to share their "stories" with you.

- Have your child "write" their own shopping list, even if it is just scribbling.
- Ask them to draw what they think Kindergarten will be like, and then have them explain it to you.

## ACTIVITY BREAK:

### I Can Read

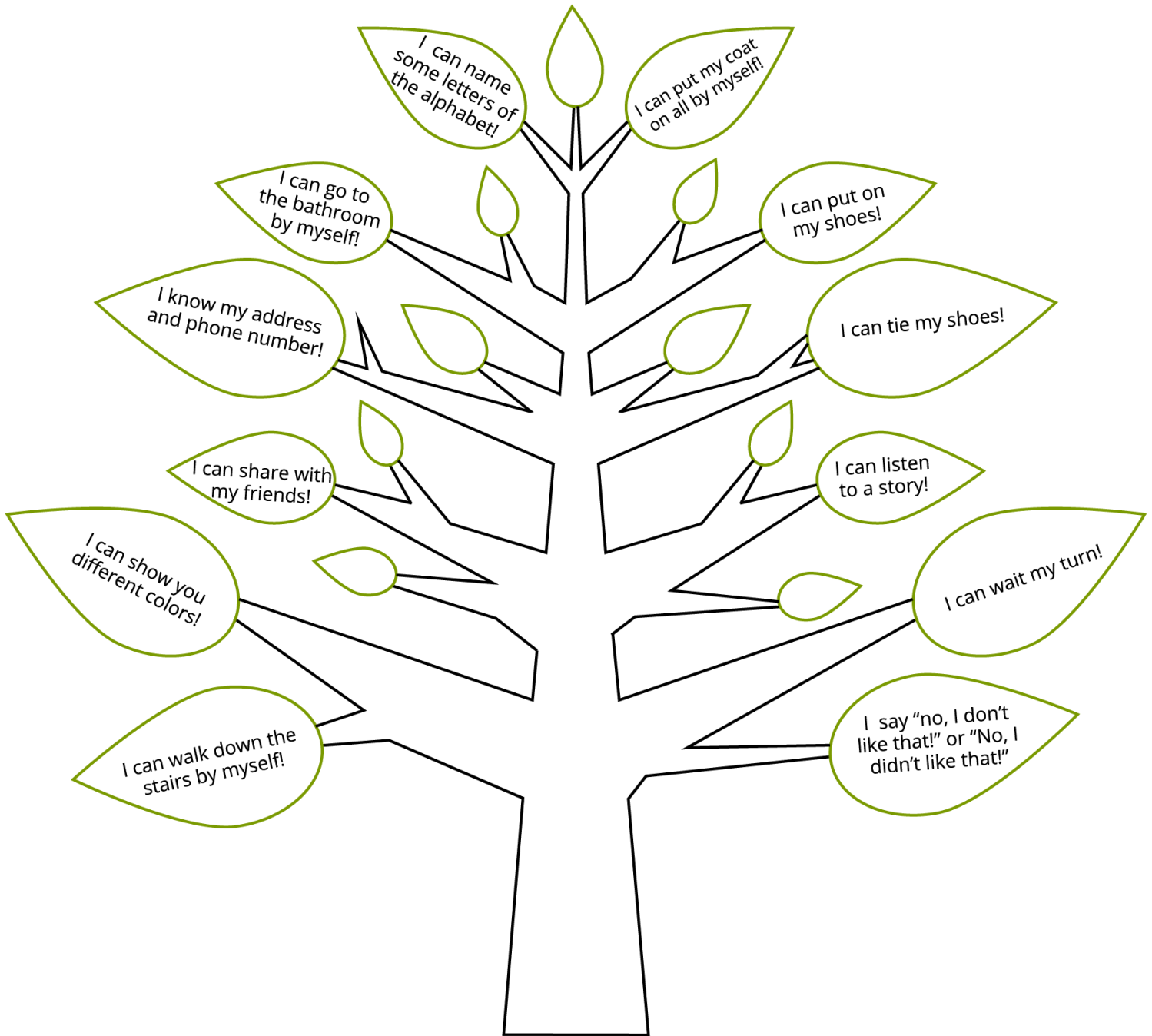
For a fun outing, head to the library and let your child pick out a few books to "read" either there or at home.

- Snuggle up and ask them to "read" the book to you by explaining what they see and what they think they are reading.
- After they're done, read the book to them, taking time to let them point out pictures and ask questions.
- When you're done reading, ask them to flip to their favorite part of the book. Have them explain why they liked that part, and then share your favorite part of the book.

# Look What I Can Do



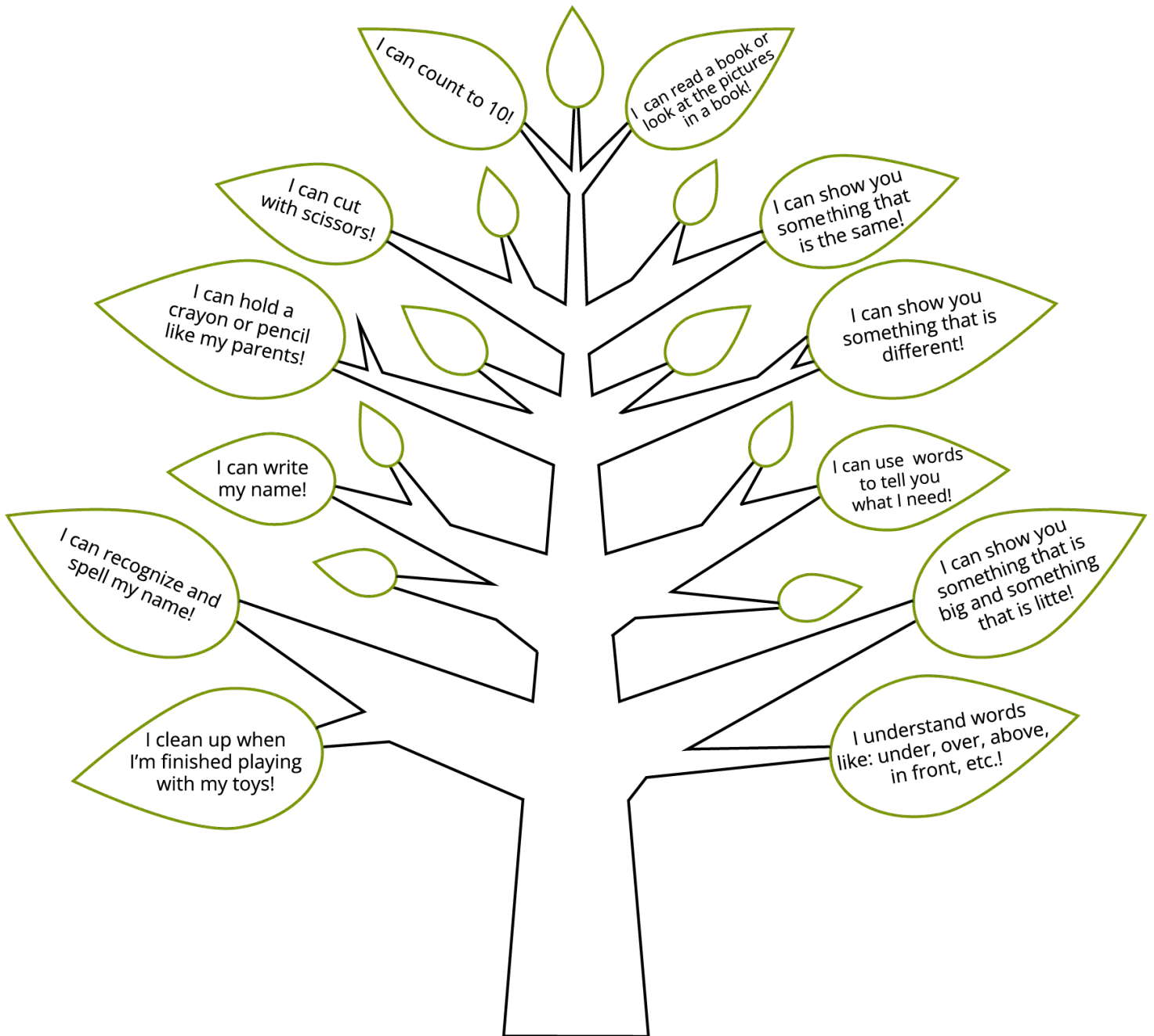
Print this out and have your child color the things that they can do.



# Look What I Can Do



Print this out and have your child color the things that they can do.







# Bright futures start in PSD

**ENROLL NOW**

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