

A Parent's Guide to School Readiness



Dear Parents,

As your child enters Kindergarten it is important to:

- Visit the school with your child.*
- Meet his/her new teacher.*
- Keep all of your child's important records together in a folder for easy access; a copy of their birth certificate, physicals, shot records, school progress report and a current photograph.*
- Stay active in your child's education.*
- Learn about what skills are typical for children entering Kindergarten.*
- Advocate for your child and inform your child's teacher and doctor if you have any concerns about his/her development.*
- Discuss your child's questions, concerns and thoughts about this new experience. Reassure your child that you will be there to pick up after school.*
- Establish a consistent routine at home by; putting clothes out the night before school, eating healthy foods for breakfast and providing plenty of time in the morning for getting dressed.*
- Enjoy taking part in the attached activities to extend learning at home and help your child prepare for Kindergarten.*

Language and Literacy



Parents can support learning by...

- Having conversations with your their child; ask questions; "Tell me about..." or "What did you think/feel/do..." etc.
- Gathering a variety of books to read to your child, by going to the local library, sharing with other families, thrift stores. Encourage your child to retell familiar stories.
- Making books with your child using photographs, magazine pictures or your child's drawings. Children can make up stories & adults can print the words.
- Naming letters or make letter sound as you print child's name or other familiar words.
- Telling nursery rhymes, family stories, & singing in the car or on walks.
- Pointing out familiar signs in the neighborhood of stores, restaurants, or safety signs to promote recognition/reading environmental print.
- Using letters cut out of magazines, newspaper ads or junk mail to use for word making activities. These can also be used to make bingo or memory matching card games.
- Playing games such as Simon Say's to increase understanding of directional words.

By the beginning of Kindergarten your child should be able to...

- *Use short sentences to make his/her wants & needs known.*
- *Use/know meaning of simple words; body parts, household items and school materials.*
- *Knows directional word; top, under, over, etc.*
- *Listen to a story & shows interest in reading.*
- *Retell a story in sequence.*
- *Asks/answer simple questions about a story.*
- *Recognize some letters and some beginning letter sounds.*
- *Understand that print carries meaning.*
- *Can print some or all of the letters in their name.*

Physical Health & Development



Parents can support learning by...

- Taking your child to the doctor and keep immunizations current and store these records in a special file.
- Establishing healthy routines at home; such as, tooth brushing, turning water faucets on/off, hand-washing, sleep routines, meals times and regular exercise.
- Providing your child with ample time to get dressed daily; children can put on their own shoes/socks, jackets, tops and pants. Allow them to practice tying, zipping, buttoning etc.
- Spending time with your child; running, hopping, balancing, throwing/catching. Take part in outdoor activities on a regular basis.
- Providing materials such as scissors, crayons, felt pens, pencils, puzzles, sand & play dough etc. that will develop the small muscles in their hands/fingers.
- Teaching your child basic safety rules; such as knowing their name/address, the difference between safe & unsafe items. Explain to your child why they should never touch a stove/ knives or run into the street, stay w/ an adult in public places, etc.

By the beginning of Kindergarten your child should be able to...

- *Practice self-help skills to stay healthy; brush his/her teeth, wash hands, eat a variety of nourishing foods.*
- *Take part in various types of physical activities; runs, hops, jumps, balance, throws.*
- *Builds with blocks, puts together simple puzzles, holds crayon/pencil and uses scissors.*
- *Be able to state their first and last name upon request and know street name/address.*
- *Practice safe behaviors at home, in the car, on walks, in the neighborhood, and in other public places, with few adult reminders.*

Social & Emotional Development



Parents can support learning by....

- Bringing your child to class regularly and explaining the importance of being at school every day.
- Planning regular times for your child to play with other children; family members, neighbors, or visiting places in the community.
- Talking with your child about how they are feeling and describe emotions using words such as; happy, sad, scared, angry etc.
- Looking at books and magazines and discuss how the character might be feeling in the story/picture.
- Playing pretend with puppets, stuffed animals, dolls or action figures. Make up situations to discuss feelings, sharing, taking turns, using polite words etc.
- Teaching your child simple house hold chores; folding clothes, putting toys away, helping with dishes etc. and give children time to do carry out these tasks.
- Modeling polite words to your child and others throughout daily routines; meals, chores and outings.
- Promoting independence by letting your child try to do things with minimal adult help.
- Playing games that involve following 2-3 step directions, with small groups of friends, such as, Simon Says, Follow the Leader, board or card games.

By the beginning of Kindergarten your child should be able to...

- *Separate from their parent for short periods of time.*
- *Describe how they are feeling by using words; happy, sad, scared, angry, etc.*
- *Get along with others by using words to get wants and needs known, sharing, taking turns, etc.*
- *Use polite words; please, thank-you, your welcome.*
- *Control behavioral impulses; he/she can sit, listen, and follow simple directions, wait for turn, etc.*

Cognition & General Knowledge



Parents can support learning by...

- Collecting and counting small objects (up to 10) with your child; rocks, small toys, shells, leaves, items in the household "junk drawer" etc. Add containers and use vocabulary; empty/full, more/less, heavy/light.
- Printing numbers to match correct number of objects for your child to copy. Counting/chanting/singing numbers up to 20 while on walks or driving in the car, etc.
- Count through the day; number of steps while walking up stairs, dishes/forks while setting the table or socks while doing laundry, etc. Count fingers and toes to show your child their age.
- Putting collected items in order; smallest to largest, shortest to longest, etc.
- Sorting items by shape, color, size, function (things we play with/things we eat/things in our home, etc.)
- Reading number books; The Three Bears, The Three Billy Goats Gruff, etc.
- Doing projects with your child; planting, cooking, household repairs, setting clocks etc.
- Asking your child prediction questions: "What do you think would happen if we...didn't eat lunch? Or "We didn't go to sleep at night?" "Didn't go to school?" etc.
- Pointing out and discussing your observations about the world around you; "Look it's starting to get dark (night) outside." "The sun came up ...what do we do in the morning?" "Let's watch the rain come down..." etc.

By the beginning of Kindergarten your child should be able to...

- *Recognize and sort items by shape, color, size & function.*
- *Count aloud to 20.*
- *Recognize & print some numbers.*
- *Count objects up to 10.*
- *Understand the difference between morning, noon, night/day.*
- *Tells his/her age.*
- *Understand the difference between size; big, little, long, short.*
- *Recognize some colors; red, green, yellow, blue.*
- *Recognize simple shapes; circle, square, triangle.*
- *Understands concepts such as, empty, full, heavy, light, etc.*

Approaches to Learning



Parents can support learning by...

- Taking your child on various outings in the community, neighborhood and beyond.
- Discussing the things that you see and do together.
- Encouraging your child to tell you about a favorite thing or situation. Also discuss the things your child does not like and why.
- Playing simple board/card games, putting puzzles together. And encouraging your child to stay with the task until it is complete.
- Doing home projects together, planting, painting, cooking etc.
- Providing your child with creative art materials; crayons, paper, paint or clay and use their imagination to "make things" without using coloring books or patterns.
- Exposing your child to a variety of experiences, such as, different types of music, foods and clothing from other countries or historical eras etc.

By the beginning of Kindergarten your child should be able to...

- *Show curiosity about the world.*
- *Ask questions and be interested in learning new things.*
- *Attend and complete simple tasks.*
- *Express likes, dislikes and interests.*
- *Have the ability to use a wide range of media and materials.*
- *Express themselves creatively.*
- *Try new experiences.*

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*The
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who receive
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