

Helping Your Child Transition into Kindergarten

The following suggestions have been collected from kindergarten teachers in order to help families and children successfully meet the challenges of transitions from preschool to kindergarten.

Developing listening skills and increased attention by:

- Gradually increasing the length or number of stories you read to your child.
- Asking questions about what you have read.
- Ask factual questions, such as, "What was the name of the dog?"
- Ask prediction questions such as, "What do you think will happen when...?"
- Ask personal opinion questions such as, "What would you have done if you were in that situation?"

Developing social skills by:

- Modeling decision-making and fairness.
- Providing social experiences for your child to be with other adults and children by joining playgroups, going to storytime at the library, playing on a team, and taking group lessons.
- Modeling how to share and take turns.
- Modeling how to get attention appropriately.
- Fostering his/her independence.
- Modeling problem-solving behavior by "thinking out loud."
- Modeling persistence through trial and error.
- Modeling good manners by using such words as "please", "thank you", and "excuse me."

Developing self-control by:

- Having realistic expectations of your child's abilities.
- Modeling how to deal with frustration, difficult tasks and anger.
- Modeling how to problem solve.
- Talking out loud while you think of solution to your own challenges.

Give you child small responsibilities or chores such as:

- Making the bed.
- Picking up the toys.
- Feeding the pets.
- Helping with yard work and/or housework.

Academic skills:

- Counting to ten.
- Counting things (socks, cars, toys, trees, spoons, etc.).
- Naming and recognizing letters in their name.
- Recognizing most letters both lower and upper case.
- Recognizing and naming the four basic shapes (circle, square, rectangle and triangle).
- Playing simple board games like Candyland

Developing fine motor skills:

- Tying shoes.
- Using scissors.

Signs of Kindergarten Readiness

Children differ greatly in their growth rate and development. The following list of signs is only a guide for parents to gauge their child's readiness.

We encourage families to begin talking about Kindergarten with children now, to check out books at the library about getting ready for Kindergarten, and to listen and validate your child's feelings or fears, as it is a huge transition for our little ones.

Signs that your child is developmentally ready for Kindergarten:

- Wants to go to school
- Is comfortable away from parents for several hours
- Has the ability to express ideas and feelings to adults other than parents
- Take care of toileting needs independently, including buttoning, zipping
- Hangs up sweaters and jackets without help
- Takes care of personal belongings and can identify them
- Accepts minor disappointments or limits without tears
- Listens to and follows directions
- Speaks in complete sentences
- Uses and understands many words
- Asks a lot of questions
- Says and notices words that rhyme in stories
- Makes up and shares personal stories about his or her interests
- Selects familiar books and tells why he or she likes them
- Is able to retell familiar stories, nursery rhymes or songs
- Recognizes letters and letter sounds
- Uses a pencil or crayon with a relaxed and controlled grasp
- Draws simple recognizable pictures
- Recognizes the symbols 1-10
- Describes and talks about objects that have different sizes, colors, shapes and patterns
- Sorts objects from smallest to largest and from shortest to tallest and lightest to heaviest
- Repeats a series of four numbers without practice
- Understand and participates in conversations
- Stays involved in a directed activity to its completion
- States their own full name and age to the teacher