

SCHOOL READINESS INDICATORS

As children approach kindergarten, there are certain indicators used to determine how well they might do. In this article, we discuss guidelines for typical 4 year olds, and what parents can do to help the child get ready for school. As a childcare provider, you play an important role in observing the child's development, and providing parents with information to help the children get ready for kindergarten.

Remember, all children develop at different rates and in different ways, the following are just guidelines that may point out some developmental problems, delays, or differences. If you have any questions, or need referral to support or agencies, please contact: Loretta Chuckrow, RN, PHN, Health Care Consultant at 522-1413 Ext 128.

SOCIAL SKILLS

- Shares and takes turns
- Asks and answers simple questions
- Asks adults for help when needed
- Participates in group activities
- Solves problems
- Makes decisions with other children
- Leans to play with friends
- Willing to try new tasks
- Can focus attention on activities for at least ten minutes

MATH SKILLS

- Counts from 1 to 10
- Recognizes (names) some numerals from 1 to 10
- Groups objects that are alike (animals, foods, toys)
- Knows what is the same and what is different
- When asked, he/she is able to give you: one object, two objects and three objects
- Is able to identify a circle, a square, a rectangle, and a triangle

COMMUNICATION

- Uses 5-7 word sentences
- Speaks intelligibly to strangers (almost 100% of the time)
- Uses past tense
- Talks with friends
- Asks for help
- Looks at pictures in a book
- May pretend to read
- Tells simple stories
- Names colors (red, blue, green, yellow, orange, and purple)
- States first and last name
- Recognizes first name in print
- Draws a picture of self

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

- Is able to use scissors
- Cuts on line
- Walks, climbs, runs
- Balances one foot
- Hops on one foot
- Catches ball

The following are things parents and childcare providers can do to help prepare children for school.

WHAT CAN PARENTS DO?

- Teach your child the safe way to school or the bus stop
- Bring your child to the school campus before school starts
- Teach your child his/her name
- Have a definite time for meals, rest, play, bedtimes, and to wake-up
- Make sure your child arrives to school on time
- Label all clothing, books and other articles brought to school
- Dress your child comfortable to allow movement for active play
- Leave your child at the classroom door upon arrival
- Keep the school informed about any changes such as new telephone number, mailing address, home address, etc.
- Every time you visit your child's classroom, you first need to notify the school office
- Give your child praise for achievement
- Be consistent about structure, privileges, consequences, responsibilities, and expectations
- Tell your child every day that you love him/her.

SAFETY

- Keep home and care smoke free.
- Have children ride in the back seat, using seat belts and correct car seat.
- Keep guns unloaded and locked or remove from home.
- Teach your child emergency phone numbers.
- Bike helmets and protective gear for bikes, skateboards.
- Teach your child pedestrian and neighborhood safety schools
- Teach the child safety rules regarding strangers.

PERSONAL AND HEALTH CARE

- **Adequate sleep**-Kindergarten children need from 10-12 hours of sleep every night
- **Nourishing food**-All children need body-building nutritious meals and snacks.

Limit high-fat or low-nutrient foods and beverages such as candy, chips or soft drinks.

A healthy breakfast is a must for every child.

- **Cleanliness**-Please help your child to develop a responsible attitude to maintain a clean body, clean teeth, and clean clothes
- **Clothing**-School clothing should be simple, comfortable, washable, and weather appropriate
- **Regular check-ups**-Since all first grade children must show evidence of a health screening examination within 18 months of entering the first grade, it is not too early to fulfill this requirement during the Kindergarten year.
- **Immunizations**-Children must have up-to-date immunization records when they register for Kindergarten.
- **Oral health**- Ensure that the child brushes his teeth twice a day with a pea-size amount of fluoridated toothpaste. Regularly supervise tooth brushing.
Give your child fluoride supplements as recommended by your health provider.
Schedule a dental appointment for your child.

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

- **Encourage** your child to talk about thoughts and feelings; listen carefully to your child.
- **Model and teach** about apologies, cooperation, patience, forgiveness and consideration for others.
- **Remember, discipline is a form of teaching, not physical punishment.** Try to be fair and consistent.
- **Get help** if you are worried about your child's feelings or behaviors.
- **Remember that parenting is a difficult job.**

Source: Next Step, Kindergarten, Public School Transition. Published by: SCPEO/Head Start/Early Head Start.