

Ready Set Kindergarten

Kindergarten Readiness
Presentation

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Ready Set Kindergarten

- Is my Child Ready?
- What should I do as a parent do to get my child ready?
- What to expect (am I ready)?
- How do I choose a school?



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Is My Child ready?

- Education defines readiness according to five different domains:
 - Health and physical development
 - Social and emotional development
 - Approaches to learning
 - Language development and communication
 - Cognition and general development

<http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~SchoolReadiness/SRExecSummary.pdf>



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Health and Physical

- Can run and jump (if not handicapped)
- On target with pediatric assessment
- Sense of spatial awareness and balance
- Shows some degree of right or left dominance
- Have self-help skills: dressing, eating, and toileting
- Able to manipulate small objects, copy simple symbols, hold a pencil



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Social and Emotional Development

- Able to learn and play in a group
- Able to trust other adults and children
- Able to play with, not just next to, other children
- Some degree of independence and self-direction
- Self-control or ability to delay gratification (even briefly)



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Approaches to Learning

- Reasonably confident to try new things
- Interested in school and in learning new things
- Eager to engage in learning activities
- Enthusiast about coming to school



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Language Development and Communication

- Able to understand directions
- Able to express needs
- Able to communicate with adults and other children
- Can express thoughts in sentences
- Reasonably broad vocabulary



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Cognition and General development

- Able to focus and concentrate on an activity for 10 to 15 minutes
- Understands that letters stand for something
- Understands that printed text is spoken language written down
- Has had experiences with environment (grocery store, post office, library, department store, etc.)
- Can follow simple directions and remember simple routines
- Able to stick with and solve simple problems



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Is My child ready?

- At Preschool parent-teacher conferences, your teachers assessed based upon these categories.
- Keep in mind, all children who meet the legal age requirement are entitled to start school.



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Should I hold my child back?

- Most children do not meet all of the guidelines for readiness (that is okay)
- Talk with your teachers, pediatrician, and family members to get their perspective
- Trust your gut feeling
- Ask your teacher, if you can observe your child in the back of the room or through a window (your child needs to know you are not there)
- Visit schools you are interested in and observe the children. Can you see your child joining in these activities?



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Kindergarten teachers beliefs on readiness:

- Well nourished and rested.
- Enthusiastic about learning.
- Curious about trying new activities.
- Verbal enough to communicate his thoughts and needs.
- Able to share and take turns.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement.



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What should I do as a parent do to get my child ready?

- Read to your child every day and model reading in your home. This is the best foundation you can give him or her.
- Make the most out of everyday tasks such as following directions.
- Give your child play time with peers.
- Take your child to visit his or her kindergarten and show him or her where the class is, where they eat, hang coats, use the restroom and play.



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What should I expect (am I ready)?

- Expect your child to be a little unsure, but excited.
- Expect your child to pick up on your feelings.
- Expect your child to be exhausted.
- Expect not to be ready, but know you have to let go.
- Expect to feel happiness, sadness, and worry when your child leaves for kindergarten.
 - Excited for your child's big step
 - Sadness because your child is taking a huge step
 - Worry about your child's social relationships



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How to Choose a school?

- Take a school tour
 - What is teacher-student ratio (class size)?
 - What is teacher turnover?
 - What is their philosophy of education?
 - How long have you and other teachers been teaching?
 - What is a typical day like?
 - Why should I choose this school?
 - When does your child eat? Who is on the playground with them?
 - What happens if your child is hurt?
 - Does the teacher contact through email?
 - Do you encourage parents to volunteer and how?
 - Can you bring your child for a visit before school and how do I arrange that?
- Ask yourself
 - Where is this school? (how convenient, how long of a bus ride)
 - Does it feel welcoming?
 - What does your gut feeling tell you?



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What You Should See When You Visit?

- Students singing songs, acting out plays, reciting silly poems, and discussing stories.
- Independent reading time, whether they are reading or looking at the pictures.
- Repeated practice working with letters and sounds, using a variety of approaches.
- Labels on cubbies, signs on activity centers, a calendar marking each child's birthday, and other words conveying the importance of language.
- A comfy library corner with colorful books at different reading levels and on different topics.

<http://www.greatschools.net/cgi-bin/showarticle/CA/377>



In sum

- Kindergarten is your child's first big step in life and the hardest. You no longer know every minute what they are doing.
- Keep the channels of communication open at all times, never hesitate to talk to your teacher
- Laugh, smile, and enjoy this time. They will only be in kindergarten for a short time.



References

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