

Preparing Your Child for Kindergarten: A Checklist for Parents and Families Parent Tip #4

This checklist, although not exhaustive, can help to guide you in preparing your child for school. It's best to look at the items included as goals toward which to aim. They should be done, as much as possible, through everyday life or by fun activities you've planned with your child. If your child lags behind in some areas, don't worry. Remember that all children are unique. They grow and develop at different rates—and no one thing guarantees that a child is ready for school.

Good Health and Well-Being

My child:

- Eats a balanced diet.
- Receives regular medical and dental care and has had all the necessary immunizations.
- Gets plenty of rest.
- Runs, jumps, plays outdoors, and does other activities that help develop large muscles and provide exercise.
- Works puzzles, scribbles, colors, paints, and does other activities that help develop small muscles.



Social and Emotional Preparation

My child:

- Is learning to be confident enough to explore and try new things.
- Is learning to work well alone and to do many tasks for himself.
- Has many opportunities to be with other children and is learning to cooperate with them.
- Is curious and motivated to learn.
- Is learning to finish tasks (for example, picks up own toys).
- Is learning to use self-control.
- Can follow simple instructions.
- Helps with family chores.



The Importance of Reading to Your Child Parent Tip #5

Reading research indicates that the single most important activity for building knowledge required for eventual success in reading is reading aloud to children. (Anderson et al., 1985)

- Read to and with your child.
- Read storybooks full of action and adventure.
- Let your child choose the story, retell parts, repeat silly rhymes or big words.
- Write shopping lists.
- Let your child make their own books, take messages, and sign their art work.
- Use magnetic refrigerator letters, posters, newspapers, and magazines.
- Read words on t-shirts and cereal boxes.
- Play with educational toys.

- Tell stories. It's a fun way to teach values, pass on family history, and build your child's listening and thinking skills.
- Make sure your child has plenty to read. Find books about their interests.
- Help your child build a personal library. (Give books as gifts and rewards).
- Check on your child's progress. Listen to your child read. Read what they write. Talk to their teachers.



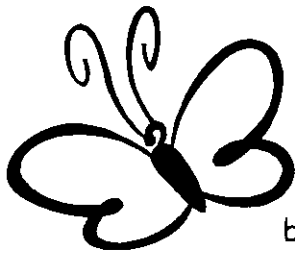
School age is the appropriate time to begin formal instruction in reading. However, children should be exposed to reading from the first days of life with parents at home, and in pre-school if they attend one.

At the beginning of Jim Trelease's book, *Read Aloud Handbook*, he has this delightful excerpt from a poem by Strickland Gillilan, "The Reading Mother": (17)



**You may have tangible wealth untold:
Caskets of jewels and coffers of gold.
Richer than I you can never be-
I had a mother who read to me.**






From Teddy to Ready (2002) by Susan Martelli










What to Expect of a Kindergartner Parent Tip #6

Note: Kindergarten children come to school with very different backgrounds and personalities. Yet, despite this diversity, they often share certain characteristics.









A child entering kindergarten will probably:

-  Prefer a fairly routine schedule.
-  Perform better under consistent discipline.
-  Like opportunities to show his independence.
-  Seek affection and security within the home.
-  Be independent in eating, dressing, toileting, and sleeping.




Physically most kindergartners will be:

-  Extremely active for short periods, separated by longer periods of calm and quiet.
-  Maturing in large and small muscle control.
-  Susceptible to childhood diseases.
-  Beginning to lose primary teeth and get permanent teeth.
-  Somewhat farsighted as their eyes are not yet mature.
-  Lacking full development of eye-hand coordination.
-  Learning to snap their fingers, whistle, and wink.

Socially and emotionally, a child in kindergarten will probably:

-  Have a creative and vivid imagination.
-  Show pride and concern about his possessions.
-  Argue with peers frequently.
-  Like immediate results, not remote goals.
-  Have difficulty understanding and remembering rules.
-  Change her mind often.
-  Be very curious.
-  Procrastinate in completing tasks, particularly adult-directed tasks.

You can help meet the developmental needs of your child by encouraging participation in selected activities. Let your child:

-  Ask permission to use the possessions of others. Teach him to understand that respect for personal property is a two-way street.
-  Go shopping with you, make a purchase, pay for the item and receive change.
-  Know that he is accepted as he is.



Helpful Hints from Kindergarten Teachers (For families of four-year-olds)

Parent Tip #9

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

Kindergarten teachers stated that they would like parents/families to take the following more seriously:

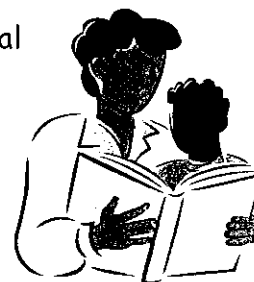
- Attendance
- Tardiness
- Updating emergency contact records
- Checking the child's backpack for notes
- Signing and returning papers
- Asking their children about their school day

Help children develop listening skills and increase attention by:

- Gradually increasing the length or number of stories you read to your child.
- Turning off the television and talking with your child. TV does not help your child develop listening skills.



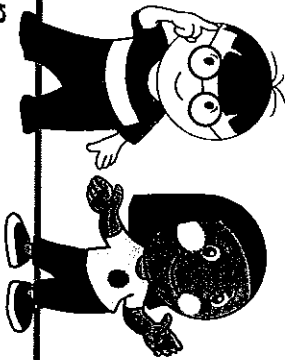
- Asking questions about what you have read.
 - Ask factual questions such as, "What was the name of the dog?"
 - Ask prediction questions such as, "What do you think will happen when...?"
 - Ask personal opinion questions such as, "What would you have done if you were in that situation?"



Share with your child the differences in curriculum and environment they might experience in the new setting, such as:

- More structured time and more teacher-directed activities.
- More group projects and less free play.
- More inside activities, less outside time.
- More schoolwide rules.
- Lunch in the cafeteria.
- More children in their class.

I Go to Kindergarten



I can

Blank space for writing.

I love to

Blank space for writing.

I want to

Blank space for writing.



My friend is

Blank space for writing.

I am good at

Blank space for writing.

I learned

Blank space for writing.

Visit readyfreddy.org for more great ideas.