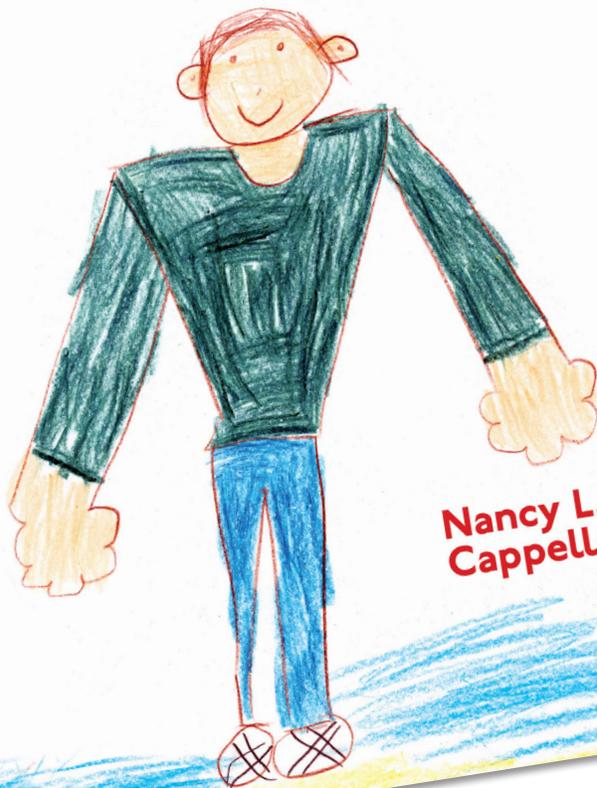


Kindergarten Readiness



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choice requires conscientious effort and investigation to ensure that not only the kindergarten class but the overall school is indeed a good match for their child. There are many factors that go into this decision. Whether families are exploring options for private school or they just want to know more about their public school, they need to consider the varied components. Resource 8.3 provides a list of factors to consider.

CONCLUSION

The family plays a vital part in a child's readiness for and transition to kindergarten. Families who understand the complexity of kindergarten readiness, are informed about their child's progress in preschool, understand what they can do in the home environment to help prepare their child for kindergarten, and have established a communicative and collaborative partnership with their preschool and kindergarten will most likely contribute positively to their child's early start in school.

Resource 8.1 Family Activities in All Domains of Early Learning and Development

Physical Well-Being and Motor Development

This domain encompasses the characteristics, skills, and abilities of a child's physical health and overall well-being; self-help skills; fitness; and gross motor, fine motor, sensorimotor, and graphomotor abilities. Healthy children enjoy a freedom that allows them to focus on or actively engage in experiences crucial to the learning process. Encourage developing abilities in the following areas:

- Gross Motor
 - Running, jumping, hopping, skipping, climbing, kicking, throwing, catching
- Fine Motor
 - Manipulating small objects: Legos, small blocks and puzzles, buttons, clothes pins, paintbrushes, sewing cards, hole punch, glue stick, scissors
- Sensorimotor
 - Playing in water (pouring; playing with turkey basters, brushes, and spray bottles); playing in sand (digging and scooping); playing with finger paint, clay
- Graphomotor
 - Proper pencil grip and writing posture
 - Use of crayons, chalk, colored markers, and pencils
 - Trace and copy shapes, numbers, and letters

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- Color within lines
- Draw a person
- Self-Help Skills
 - Dressing, feeding, attending to bathroom needs
 - Cleaning up
 - Adjusting to transitions and routines
 - Completing an activity independently
- Overall Health
 - Sufficient sleep and nutrition
 - Stamina
 - Mental alertness

Social Development

This domain encompasses the characteristics, skills, and abilities that enable children to have secure and successful interactions and relationships with others, including peers, teachers, and other adults. Help children develop positive relationships with others by helping them

- respect the right of others and keep to their own space.
- form and sustain new friendships.
- develop sensitivity to other children's feelings.
- respect differences and perspectives of others.
- cooperate and play with other children.
- resolve conflict nonaggressively and by using compromising strategies.
- take turns and share.

Emotional Development

This domain encompasses the characteristics, skills, and abilities that enable children to have positive feelings about themselves and demonstrate self-control in the classroom setting. Help children strengthen their self-concept, self-awareness, and self-regulation of emotions and behavior by encouraging them to

- discuss their own feelings as well as those of others (i.e., fear, anger, grief, frustration).
- express and articulate feelings and emotions.
- understand the impact of their behavior.
- understand consequences of their behavior.
- demonstrate self-control.
- self-regulate emotions and behavior.
- feel self-confidence and pride in their work.

Approaches Toward Learning

This domain encompasses the inclinations, dispositions, and styles reflective of the ways children become engaged in learning and approach learning tasks. Help children's involvement in learning by encouraging them to

- accept new challenges willingly.
- persevere with difficult tasks.
- maintain effort and mental endurance.
- approach new activities with enthusiasm, and eagerness, and curiosity.
- demonstrate imagination and invention.
- ask questions.
- focus on and attend to an activity or task for 10 minutes or more.
- seek help when needed.
- share a positive orientation toward school.
- positively manage transitions and separations.

Language and Communication Development

This domain encompasses the characteristics, skills, and abilities enabling children to express themselves and communicate with others. Help children acquire greater abilities in receptive (listening) and expressive (speaking) language and communication skills by encouraging them to

- listen to, repeat, and follow two-step directions.
- ask and answer questions.
- express ideas and thoughts clearly in their primary language.
- communicate needs, wants, and thoughts clearly in English.
- listen attentively to a story for 10 or more minutes.
- engage in conversations.
- sing songs.
- read books with others.
- tell stories with others.
- build word meaning and new vocabulary.

Emerging Literacy

This domain encompasses skills and abilities having to do with the acquisition of phonemic awareness and emergent reading skills and communication in written form. Help strengthen these skills by surrounding the child with print and writing tools. Help the child understand that pictures and words convey meaning and give us knowledge about the world. Encourage the child in the following areas:

- Emergent Reading
 - Look at books of all kinds independently: picture, story, poems, concepts, nonfiction, and “how-to.”
 - Develop alphabetic and phonemic awareness.
 - Recognize and identify upper- and lowercase letters.
 - Identify letter sounds.
 - Identify and produce rhyming words.
 - Develop book awareness and demonstrate an understanding of concepts of print.
 - Recognize environmental print (i.e., *stop*, *exit*, *open*).

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- Develop story sense.
 - Retell the story.
 - Sequence events in the story.
- Build comprehension.
 - Answer questions about the story, the setting, the characters, the problem or main idea
- Emergent Writing
 - Draw pictures and dictate stories.
 - Write scribbles, letters, sounds, words, and/or sentences.
 - Write first name.

As a parent, you can also

- ask questions, speak, and listen to your child.
- share your love of reading with your family.
- model reading and writing both inside and outside the home.

Cognitive Development and General Knowledge

This domain encompasses the knowledge base a child has and the child's ability to construct, understand, acquire, and represent the world cognitively within three types of knowledge—physical, logico-mathematical, and social-conventional. Through play, children explore, discover, question, converse, and learn about the world. Encourage children in the following areas:

- Physical Knowledge
 - Observing, asking questions, and solving problems
 - Gaining exposure to, learning, and exploring the natural world through their environment
 - Identifying shapes and colors
 - Drawing pictures to represent events, people, places, and things
 - Relating cause to effect
 - Making predictions
 - Distinguishing real from pretend
 - Comparing and contrasting
 - Recognizing relationships, similarities, and differences among objects
 - Problem solving
- Social Knowledge
 - Understanding the purpose of rules
 - Understanding social-conventional norms
 - Understanding the difference between right and wrong behavior in specific situations
 - Understanding adult roles and demonstrating compliance with teachers and authority figures
- Logico-mathematical knowledge
 - Sequencing events
 - Making, copying, and extending patterns

- Sorting, classifying, and ordering objects
- Numeracy
 - Counting objects
 - Recognizing and writing numbers

Resource 8.2 Family Questionnaire: Is My Child Ready for Kindergarten?

Have the family answer these questions about their child:

- Does my child take care of his or her personal needs such as cleaning up after himself or herself, attending to his or her bathroom needs, finding his or her belongings, and putting things away?
- Does my child generally approach new activities and new situations with curiosity and enthusiasm?
- Can my child identify colors and shapes?
- Does my child express his or her emotions and feelings to others?
- Does my child form new friendships easily?
- Does my child usually pay attention to a story or attend to an activity for 10 minutes or more?
- Does my child handle difficult or challenging tasks without getting frustrated?
- Does my child concentrate and persist in completing a task or activity?
- Can my child write some of the letters of the alphabet?
- Does my child remember and follow directions without having them repeated?
- Does my child know and understand that there are consequences for his or her behavior?
- Does my child demonstrate self-control when he or she does not get his or her way?
- Can my child rhyme?
- Does my child take turns and share with other children easily?
- Can my child count, recognize, and write numbers to 10?
- Does my child work out problems or conflicts with other children independently and nonaggressively?
- Does my child know how to read?
- Can my child draw a picture of a person and use scissors, glue sticks, and markers?
- Does my child like to build with Legos and blocks?
- Does my child separate from me without anxiety?
- Does my child communicate his or her needs, wants, and thoughts clearly in English? In our primary language?
- Can my child write letters, words, and numbers?
- Does my child respect the rights of others?
- Can my child throw, catch, and kick balls; run; hop; jump; skip; and climb?
- Does my child cooperate and play with other children?
- Does my child use age-appropriate vocabulary?
- Does my child know some of the letters and sounds of the alphabet?
- Does my child enjoy looking at books independently?
- Does my child demonstrate compliance with us (parents), teachers, and other authority figures?
- Can my child hold a pencil with the proper grip?
- Can my child retell a familiar story?
- Can my child write his or her name?