

# Ready, Set, GO!

*Tips and tools to support a school ready family and build relationships with children as they develop kindergarten readiness skills*

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The skills listed in this booklet are NOT required for students to enter kindergarten. They represent the skills that would best prepare learners for a successful entry into the K-12 system.

This booklet is organized into sections based on like skills. The desired skill is listed first, followed by a definition of the skill and finally strategies to develop this skill.

# Social Emotional Readiness



## **Knows First and Last Name**

*Able to recognize and say first and last name when asked.*

- Encourage children to introduce themselves to others with first and last name.
- Label child's "things" around the home; door to their room, the spot where they hang their backpack etc.

## **Follows "rules" with a few reminders**

*Understands a rule and can follow directions (waits in line, follows others, shares, keeps hands to self)*

- Talk about "rules" in different settings. For example, we hold hands when we cross the street, but not when we play at the park.
- Talk/model to your child about home and school rules:
  - o Walking feet
  - o Hands to self
  - o Using a quiet voice

## **Transitions from one activity to another**

*Transitions involve stopping one activity and starting another or moving from one location to another one to begin something new.*

- Following a classroom/daily schedule
- Use/model a bedtime routine at home, talk about the routine in detail. "After we brush our teeth, we are going to read a bedtime story."
- Give a five minute "heads up" when transitioning to another activity.

## **Demonstrates independent self-care**

*Can do simple, everyday tasks (including dressing, eating, cleaning teeth and more).*

- Create routines and practice the steps for washing hands and brushing teeth. Sing songs or set timers to do it well.
- Ask your child to help set the table for meals.
- Promote independent toileting  
(Your child may be ready for toilet training if one or more of these signs are present)
  - Hiding when pottyting
  - Interest in others' use of the toilet
  - Having a dry diaper for two hours or more.
  - Awakening dry from a nap.
  - Telling you that they are about to go or have just gone in their diaper.
  - Dislike of wet or dirty diapers.
  - Able to perform simple undressing.

## **Pays attention for 10 minutes**

*Participates in activities and asks for help when needed*

- Read with your child.
- Do projects or tasks with your child like puzzles, activities, games, or chores.
- Attend community events or shared mealtime with family or friends.

## **Shares space and materials, takes turns**

*Works well in a group*

- Participate in play that requires taking turns.
- Create an art project with a partner. Talk about how it feels to have to wait to use a different object. Use please and thank you.
- Provide opportunities for children to play and take turns with children their age.
- Take turns sharing a happy moment from the day.

## **Identifying Emotions**

*It is important for kids to know that all emotions are okay!*

- Label or acknowledge your child's emotion ("You look angry" or "You look sad, I see tears on your face.")
- Label emotions you see in books
- Label your own emotions

## **Self-Regulation**

*Tools to help calm one's body down*

- Take deep breaths.
- Have a safe space in your room for your child to be able to go and calm their bodies.
- Hug a favorite stuffed animal.
- Count to 5.
- As a parent, model tools you use to calm your body.

# Language Readiness

*The kindergarten readiness objectives listed in this section are encouraged to be developed in the child's home language*



## **Speaks in complete sentences**

*Children develop their language skills at different rates.*

*Typically, children follow this pattern.*

*2 years – 2-word sentences*

*3 years – 3–4-word sentences*

- Talk with your children about everything you do.
- When child does not use a complete sentence, model by saying correctly and have the child repeat.

## **Follows directions**

*Able to follow instructions without adult help*

- Practice two step activities. For instance:
  - Pick up your shoes and put them in the basket.
  - Get the cup and put it on the table.
  - Take a spoon out of the drawer and put it on the table.



## **Retells simple stories/ recalls events**

*Child tells a story or recalls an event using his or her own words*

- Have your child “read” a favorite book by looking at the pictures and telling you what is happening on each page.
- Ask “w” questions while reading stories.  
**Who** is the most interesting character in the story?  
**What** are the characters doing that you did today?  
**When** did the characters \_\_\_\_\_?  
**Where** did the characters visit in the story? **Why** did they go there?  
**How** did you feel when the characters \_\_\_\_\_?

## **Repeats familiar songs, poems, rhymes**

*Sings, chants, or recites favorite songs and poems*  
Make up silly songs to a familiar tune about everyday activities

- Act out favorite songs, poems, or rhymes
- Sing songs as part of your bedtime routine

# Literacy Readiness



## **Recognizes first and last name when written**

*Able to identify their first and last name from a group*

- Label your child's door or other places in your house - hang their name on the fridge.
- Talk about how names start with capital letters and then have lowercase letters
- Write your child's name while they watch

## **Writes letters in first name**

*Child is able to print his or her name, so it is readable by others*

- Create artwork with your child using their name.
- Have your child trace their name after a model is written.
- Write a note to a family member or friend and have the child sign their name.

## **Knows how to use a book**

*Uses a book by holding the book right side up, follows text, turns one page at a time*

- Talk about the parts of a book when reading with your child. The cover, or front of the book and the back. Talk about the author and the illustrator of the book. Show how to hold onto a book and carefully turn the pages. Point out the pictures and words on the page.
- Let your child see you reading throughout the day. There are many times during every day that we read. If they see you reading, they will read too.
- Make a special time every day to sit and read. Many families use bedtime to read together, but if that doesn't work in your family, think about other ways to fit reading in together.

## **Identifies 15 upper case and 15 lower case letters**

*Able to name letters when asked*

- Point out letters everywhere you go. Look for letters at the grocery store. How many "m's" can we find today?
- Talk about the shapes of letters, point out that they have straight, slanted, and curved lines. Talk about how they are alike and different.

## **Hears the sounds in words**

*Knows that balloon starts with “buh” etc. Understands that the word “cat begins with /k/ and ends with /t/*

- Make lists of words that start with a letter sound:  
ball, bike, brown, bear, bottom, brother

## **Shares ideas with drawings and letters**

*Draws pictures and/or attempts to use letters to share ideas*

- Have writing and drawing tools easily available. For example: crayons, markers, pencils – different kinds of paper, stickers. Have an example alphabet so they can see and copy how to write letters correctly.
- Let the children have a notebook to write words or draw pictures.
- Play and practice writing and drawing though writing in the sand, in shaving cream, in finger paint
- Model writing through the day, there are many times we write during the day. Have your child help write your grocery list, or other lists you make.
- Have your child “write” thank you notes to friends and family after they receive a gift · Label pictures that child draws with at least the beginning sound.

# Physical/Motor Readiness



## **Able to control body movements**

*Coordinates movements to perform simple tasks*

- Play outside as much as possible. Go to the park, go for a walk, visit the nature center. Work on balance by walking on low ledges or lines in the sidewalk
- Practice running, skipping, jumping, and galloping with control and intent.

## **Demonstrates fine motor skills**

*Uses eye-hand coordination, strength, and control to perform simple tasks*

- Practice with crayons, markers, pencils, sidewalk chalk, paintbrushes. Write, draw shapes and lines, color within the lines · Practice cutting on straight and zigzag lines.

# Mathematic Readiness





## **Counts items (up to 10)**

*Demonstrates accuracy when counting items one by one*

- At mealtime count the spoons at the table, when cleaning up count how many toys you put away.
- Count during snack time. “You started with 5, you ate 2, how many do you have now? Let’s count together. 1-2-3.”

## **Identifies 8 shapes**

*Identifies the following: circle, square, triangle, rectangle, oval, heart, diamond, and star*

- Look for shapes while driving in the car or walking in your neighborhood (road signs or windows for example)
- Talk about shapes when setting the table, “Is this plate round or square? What shape is your pancake?”

## **Count to 10 in order**

*Able to say 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10 (in order)*

- Line up toys and count them.
- Make counting part of your day. How many people are in our family? How many steps does it take to talk to the car? How many grapes are on your plate?

## **Sorts by shape, color, and size**

*Able to separate circles from squares, red items from green and large boxes from small*

- Clean up toys and sort by color. “Let’s put all the blue toys together.”
- Unload the dishwasher and put all the forks in one spot, spoons in another. · Sort food by color (fruit loops for example)

## **Identifies 11 colors**

*Identifies the following: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, brown, black, white, gray and pink*

- When you are with your child, point out the colors of various items. “Bananas are yellow. What else can you find that is yellow?”
- Use color names when going about your day (ex. Getting dressed, eating, or shopping)
- At mealtime, name the colors of your food.

## **Creates and continues patterns**

*Able to identify and extend a pattern such as triangle, square, triangle, square  $\Delta \square \Delta \square$*

- Make patterns with loose change while waiting (at a restaurant for example)
- Use rocks, sticks, or flowers to create patterns when playing outside
- Use physical movements to create patterns (stand, sit, stand, sit)

## **Knows the difference between more, less, and same**

*Able to compare amounts (We have the same number of fingers. You are taller than I am.)*

- Fill two containers with the same object, ask which has more, less or the same?
- Create two rows of items (pennies, Legos, rocks) and ask your child, “which row has more, which has less, do they have the same amount?”

## **Identifies numbers 1-10**

*Able to name a number when you see it.*

- Look for numbers everywhere you go. For example, look for numbers on homes, road signs, or at the grocery store.

*The objective of this booklet is to share activities that help parents and caregivers use their everyday routines and surroundings to encourage Kindergarten readiness skills.*

*Your attention and happy interactions are all a child needs to be socially, emotionally, and cognitively ready for school.*

*Everyday activities like getting dressed, eating, driving in the car, shopping at the grocery store, cleaning up, and bath time are all opportunities to learn.*

*Most importantly, have fun together!*

**Thank you for your support  
and partnership!**

