

Kindergarten Readiness Program for Parents
Thursday, April 11, 2024
6:30 PM
South Buffalo Elementary
Agenda

- I. Please Sign-in!**
- II. Welcome, Introductions, and Thank You**
- III. Meeting Overview/ Rationale**
- IV. FASD Kindergarten Registration Process**
- V. Kindergarten Screenings**
- VI. Kindergarten Readiness**
- VII. Q & A Session**



Schedule of Events

- Welcome and Introductions
- Purpose and Rationale
- FASD Kindergarten Registration Process
- Kindergarten Screenings
- Kindergarten Readiness
- Upcoming Spring Events

Purpose/ Rationale

- Strengthen the Home and School Connection
 - Establish Open Lines of Communication
 - Kindergarten Readiness Begins at Home
 - Partnership with Parents
 - Familiarization of FASD Procedures/ Policies/ Programs
- Bridge the Gap Between Preschool and Kindergarten (Transitions)
- Ease Anxieties of Students and Parents
- Review Kindergarten Readiness Skills
- Provide Parents with Resources

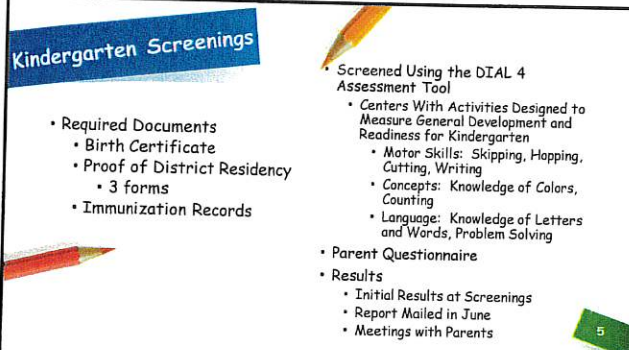
Kindergarten Registration Timeline of Events

- Kindergarten Registration Posting
 - February 2024
- Kindergarten Screening Appointment Email
 - March 2024
- Kindergarten Screenings
 - May 1-2, 2024
 - Results Mailed in June
- Kindergarten Summer Tour
 - August 2024
- Kindergarten Orientation
 - First Day of School - August 21, 2024



Kindergarten Screenings

- Required Documents
 - Birth Certificate
 - Proof of District Residency
 - 3 forms
 - Immunization Records
- Screened Using the DIAL 4 Assessment Tool
 - Centers With Activities Designed to Measure General Development and Readiness for Kindergarten
 - Motor Skills: Skipping, Hopping, Cutting, Writing
 - Concepts: Knowledge of Colors, Counting
 - Language: Knowledge of Letters and Words, Problem Solving
- Parent Questionnaire
- Results
 - Initial Results at Screenings
 - Report Mailed in June
 - Meetings with Parents

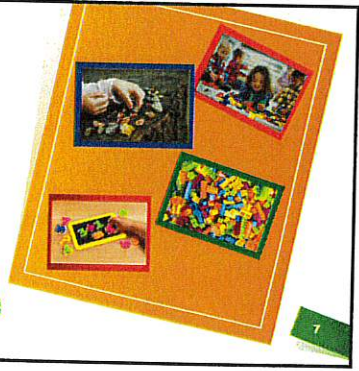


Kindergarten Readiness



What is Kindergarten Readiness?

- The foundational abilities and knowledge that children should possess before formal reading and writing instruction begins in kindergarten.
- Children develop at different rates, so not every 5-year-old will have mastered all of these skills.
- Having a solid foundation in these areas will help ensure a smoother transition into kindergarten.



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Areas of Kindergarten Readiness

- Social & Emotional Skills
- Gross & Fine Motor Skills
- Numeracy Skills
- Language & Communication Skills
- Pre-Literacy Skills
- Cognitive Skills
- Independence & Self Care Skills
- Curiosity, Creativity, & Enthusiasm for Learning Skills



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Social Emotional Learning & Development for Kindergarteners

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) refers to the process of helping children understand and manage their emotions, build positive relationships, and develop essential social skills that contribute to their overall well-being. In simpler terms, SEL for kindergarten students involves teaching them how to recognize and express their feelings, interact with others respectfully, and make good choices for success in school and everyday life.

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Social Emotional Skills

- **Identifying Emotions:**
 - Teaching children to recognize and label basic emotions such as happiness, sadness, anger, and excitement.
- **Emotional Regulation:**
 - Helping children learn strategies to manage their emotions when they feel upset, frustrated, or overwhelmed.
- **Social Skills:**
 - Teaching children how to take turns, share, and cooperate with peers and adults during play, group, and classroom activities.
- **Problem-Solving:**
 - Helping children develop basic problem-solving skills by teaching them to identify problems, consider possible solutions, and make decisions.
- **Building Relationships:**
 - Providing opportunities for children to form positive relationships with their peers and adults.
- **Self-Confidence:**
 - Encouraging children to develop a positive self-image by praising their efforts and achievements.

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First Day Jitters & Anxiety

Everyone will be nervous - you are not alone!

- Start with an exit ritual
- Practice without comparison
- Timing Matters
- Consistency is Key
- Follow Through

The Extremes and What to Look For

- Panic symptoms
 - Nausea, Vomiting, Shortness of Breath or Panic attacks before a parent leaves
- Nightmares about separation
- Fear of sleeping alone (although this is also common in kids who don't have separation anxiety)
- Excessive worry about being lost or kidnapped or going places without a parent

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Gross & Fine Motor Skills

Important for the physical development needed in order to play and complete daily tasks during the Kindergarten day

Kindergarten Readiness from an Occupational Therapy Perspective

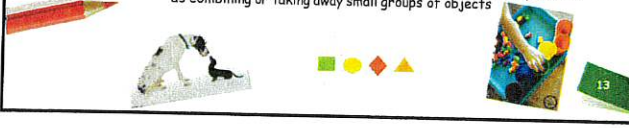
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Numeracy Skills



Important for developing early understanding of knowledge and mathematical concepts

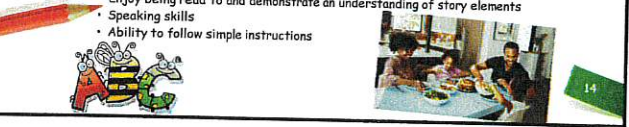
- Count to at least 20
- Understand the concept of counting objects
- Recognize and identify numbers up to 10 or higher
- Understand basic mathematical concepts such as more/less, bigger/smaller
- Recognize basic shapes
- Begin to understand basic addition and subtraction concepts, such as combining or taking away small groups of objects



Language and Communication Skills

Important for basic communication between children, their teacher, and their peers

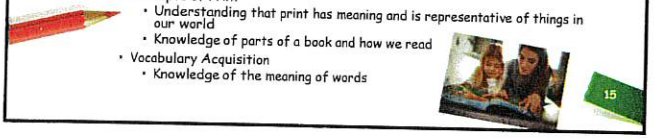
- Recognize and identify letters of the alphabet, both uppercase and lowercase
- Understand basic letter sounds and be able to identify some words
- Vocabulary development
- Express themselves verbally using complete sentences
- Listening comprehension
- Understand and follow simple instructions
- Enjoy being read to and demonstrate an understanding of story elements
- Speaking skills
- Ability to follow simple instructions



Pre-Literacy Skills

Important for children to develop prior to learning how to read, which are highly predictive of later reading success

- Letter Knowledge
 - Being able to recognize and label the letters of the alphabet
 - Knowing that each letter has its own sound(s)
- Phonological Awareness
 - Knowledge of sounds and ability to manipulate them
- Concepts of Print
 - Understanding that print has meaning and is representative of things in our world
 - Knowledge of parts of a book and how we read
- Vocabulary Acquisition
 - Knowledge of the meaning of words



Cognitive Skills

Important for regulating behavior and emotions, which is necessary for actively participating in the classroom setting

- Ability to pay attention and concentrate
- Self-control skills
- Capacity to remember instructions and carry out a task
- Adapting to change
- Ability to follow routines
- Problem-solving skills

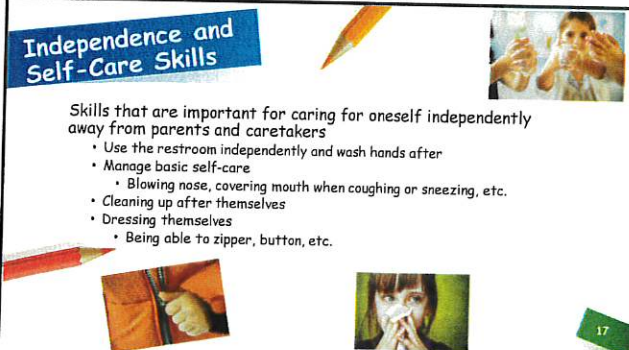


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Independence and Self-Care Skills

Skills that are important for caring for oneself independently away from parents and caretakers

- Use the restroom independently and wash hands after
- Manage basic self-care
 - Blowing nose, covering mouth when coughing or sneezing, etc.
- Cleaning up after themselves
- Dressing themselves
 - Being able to zipper, button, etc.




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Curiosity, Creativity and Enthusiasm For Learning

Skills that are important in developing a love of school and learning

- Showing an interest in learning and exploring new things
- Demonstrating curiosity about the world around them
- Asking questions to explore new topics
- Engaging in imaginative play and storytelling
- Demonstrating an eagerness to learn and participate in classroom activities
- Eagerness to express themselves through movement and music
- Enthusiasm or creating - building, arts and crafts, etc.



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Wrap-Up and Q&A

Readiness Packet in Folders


- Simple ways to enhance Kindergarten Readiness skills in your children

Summer Skills Readiness Packet

- To be distributed at Kindergarten Screenings with concrete ideas for summer readiness activities

Q&A

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Thank You for Coming!

See you at Kindergarten Screenings on May 1st & 2nd!



KINDERGARTEN READINESS

FROM AN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PERSPECTIVE

JESSICA ELLENBERGER OTR/L AND NIKKI LADUCEUX, OTR/L

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ROLE IN THE KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOM

- Whole classroom lessons
 - Pencil power
 - Super scissor skills
- Fine motor centers
- Collaboration and consultation with teachers
 - Student specific adaptations or accommodations

GROSS MOTOR SKILLS

What are gross motor skills?

- Strength and coordination of the big muscle groups

Why are gross motor skills important?

- Foundational gross motor skills and core strength and stability are needed in order to build fine motor skills for daily school tasks.
- For children to interact with friends on the playground, keep their bodies upright and engaged in the classroom, participation in gym, and team sports/play. Some expectations of Kindergarten include sitting on the floor, sitting criss cross applesauce, getting up from the floor, and sitting at desk for classroom instruction.

ENCOURAGING GROSS MOTOR SKILLS IN YOUR CHILD

- Core strengthening to sit on the floor and get up from the floor, criss cross applesauce
- Playing in different positions such as playing on their bellies on the floor, kneeling, long sitting on the floor, and standing
- Step onto and off of the sidewalk while carrying their backpack and lunch
- Designing and completing obstacle courses
- Songs - floor is lava, party freeze dance, head/shoulders/knees/toes
- Yoga
- Beach ball
- Climbing
- Simon says and Imitating games
- Playing with other children
- Playing on a playground with other kids

FINE MOTOR SKILLS

What are fine motor skills?

- Fine motor skills are the skills needed to make movements using the small muscles in our hands and wrists. We rely on these skills to do tasks in school, at play, and in our homes. These small movements come so naturally to most people that we usually don't think about them. But fine motor skills are complex. They involve coordinated effort between the brain and the muscles.

Why are these skills important?

- Children use their hands all day at home and at school. They use fine motor skills to manipulate school tools such as pencil and scissors. They use fine motor skills to open containers for lunch and in the classroom, to manipulate fasteners on their clothing, interact with toys, and feed themselves.

ENCOURAGING FINE MOTOR SKILLS IN YOUR CHILD

Encouraging hand strengthening and coordination by:

- Playing with resistive tools such as a hole punch, eye dropper, water spray bottle
- Playing with toys such as legos, Sphero, pop beads, beads, and play dough
- Ripping paper, handy scoopers, using scissors- cut Play-Doh, cut cardstock
- Practice making pre-writing shapes and lines- these lines and shapes will eventually form letters. It is important that children be able to form vertical, horizontal, and diagonal lines, as well as pre-writing shapes such as curves, +, and a circle prior to forming letters since they are the foundation for letters. Be creative- use chalk, paint, markers. Have your child writing using their fingers in shaving cream or a tray of rice or sand. Children can imitate then copy. Use terms such as top, bottom, and middle, right and left, big and little.
- Playing on the floor especially on their bellies helps to develop core strength and upper body strength- color, draw, read, and do puzzles, even watch their favorite show in a new position.
- Using kitchen tongs, clothespins, peeling stickers, and stringing beads

VISUAL MOTOR SKILLS

What are visual perception skills?

- The brain's ability to make sense of what the eyes see
- Visual perception includes subcategories of: visual memory, visual discrimination, form constancy, visual closure, figure ground, visual scanning, spatial relations, and position in space.

What are visual motor skills?

- Visual motor integration is the coordination of movements based on the perception of visual information.

Why are these skills important?

- Visual motor skills are used to develop the ability to make pre-writing lines and shapes, form letters and numbers, reading and writing, navigating the environment, and playing with friends.
- Visual perception deficits can interfere with a child's ability to read a series of letters and numbers, detect small differences in lines and letters, find words on a page, scan papers and change their eye focus from the board to their papers and back again, align letters and numbers for classwork, and understand positional terms needed for handwriting such as top, bottom, and middle.

HOW CAN YOU HELP TO DEVELOP VISUAL PERCEPTION AND VISUAL MOTOR SKILLS?

- Practice pre-writing lines and shapes- start by letting your child imitate you then move to copying the lines and shapes
- Play puzzles
- Play games/activities that "spot the differences" or the things that are the same
- Scavenger hunts- use terms to describe what you see to your child. Look for items in a category such as shapes or colors. Talk about positional terms such as over, under, beside.
- Copy
- Catching balls or reaching to pop bubbles
- Coloring, drawing, mazes

PLAY SKILLS

Why are these skills important?

- Play is child's main occupation - play can be free play or structured in nature. Much of a child's learning at this age is done through play.
- Play skills are important to help children learn how to follow directions, take turns, and problem solve
- Different types of play allow for creativity, sharing, and the development of fine motor, visual perceptual, and motor planning skills

ENCOURAGING PLAY SKILLS IN YOUR CHILD

- Participating in games with rules assists in learning how to follow directions, prepare to follow classroom rules, and tolerate winning/losing.
- Constructive games with multiple steps (lego sets, art projects, puzzles). Constructive play also helps children develop spatial perception and how objects relate to each other, this helps to lay the foundation for future academic skills.
- Pretend play lays the foundation for abstract thinking and helps children develop creativity, problem-solving skills, and how to understand others emotions and relate to their peer's feelings.

SELF HELP SKILLS

What are self help skills?

- Feeding, grooming, dressing, putting shoes on, clothing fasteners, managing backpack, putting coat on and off, toileting

Why are these skills important?

- Participation in school routines allowing your child to maximize their independence and time in the school environment.

HOW CAN YOU HELP DEVELOP SELF-HELP SKILLS AT HOME?

- Practice opening containers that you might send your child for lunch. This includes water bottles, sandwich bags, reusable containers, and snacks. Also, practice eating within a time frame- lunch goes quickly here at school.
- Carry trays similar to a lunch tray
- Practice thorough hand washing, nose blowing, and table clean up
- Encourage them to put on their shoes, coats, hats by themselves
- Practice dressing a doll or teddy bear

OT Summer Activity-A-Day Calendar

	Monday Gross Motor	Tuesday Fine Motor	Wednesday Visual-Motor	Thursday Self-Help	Friday Sensory
Week 1	Animal Walks	String beads or cereal on pipe cleaners	I spy activities	Sort clothes by color or category	Sand/water play-use measuring cups and containers to scoop, dump, and fill
Week 2	Create an Obstacle Course	Use a spray water bottle to water the flowers or "clean the rocks/walkway" outside	Fold and cut paper	Practice zipping, buttoning, and snapping clothes on a teddy bear or babydoll	Blow bubbles- use pincher fingers, clapping, or stomping to pop them
Week 3	Kids Yoga *try an episode of cosmic yoga on youtube	Fingerpaint or chalk lines, shapes, and letters	Go on a scavenger hunt- name items in categories such as shape and color	Have a picnic lunch and use a school lunchbox and baggies to practice opening on their own	Make lines and letters in shaving cream
Week 4	Freeze Dance or Simon Says	Play-Doh play and create- cut dough with scissors, roll and shape dough, and have fun	Spot the difference puzzles or do an interlocking puzzle	Sort silverware	Create your own sensory bin using rice, beans, or shredded paper- hide items to find

GET OUT OF THAT CHAIR!

ENCOURAGE CHILDREN TO ASSUME DIFFERENT POSITIONS

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PRONE ON FOREARMS

Prone on forearms builds strength through a child's neck, back, and shoulders.



«« 1/2 KNEEL

1/2 Kneel increases core strength and improves hip stability. Also prepares body for single limb stance.



«« SQUAT

Playing in a squatted position works on balance and stretches a child's heel cord musculature.



LONG LEG SITTING

Long sit stretches a child's hamstring musculature and works on balance

SIDE SIT »»

Side sit encourages rotation through the trunk, weight shifting, and crossing midline.



«« TALL KNEEL

Tall kneel strengthens hip extensors and works to improve core stability.



2-POINT QUADRUPED

Hands and knees or 2-point quadruped works on core strength, hip and shoulder stability, weight shifting, and balance

Dear Parents

(of elementary school aged kids)

When your kids come to school we will have to help them open LOTS of the things you pack for lunch.

PLEASE HAVE THEM PRACTICE OPENING THINGS BY THEMSELVES.

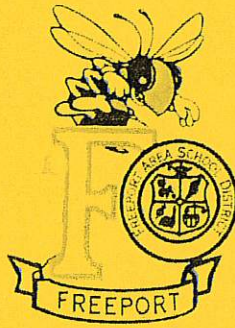
These are EASIER to open. If I help them open it, I won't be putting my hands on parts that will go in their mouth.



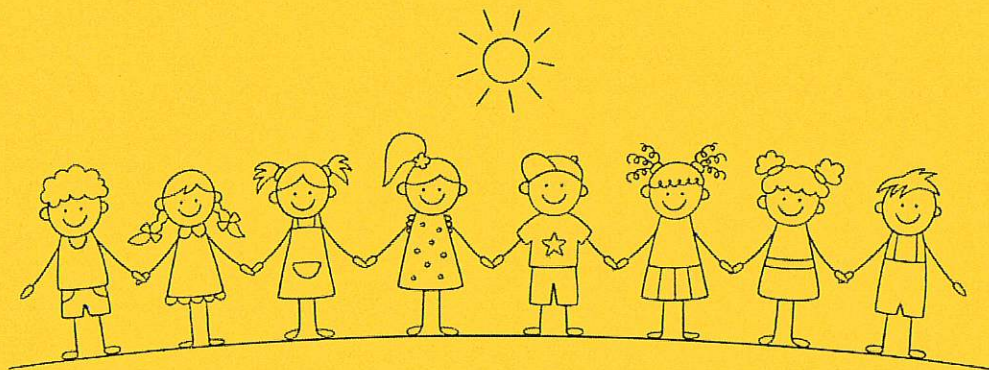
These are HARDER to open. If you send these PLEASE have them PRACTICE opening it. If I help them open it, I will be putting my hands on parts that will go in their mouth.



If your kiddo can open everything in their lunch, it means less time waiting with their hand up, more time eating and less germs!! (even though we are washing our hands and disinfecting)



South Buffalo Elementary Kindergarten Readiness 2024



What is Kindergarten Readiness?

Kindergarten Readiness refers to a set of knowledge and host of skills that are important for children to develop prior to Kindergarten entry. While Kindergarten Readiness is not a one size fits all term, there are several generally agreed upon areas of child development that are important for children to make strides in before Kindergarten entry. Acquiring knowledge and skills in these areas is highly predictive of academic success in Kindergarten and beyond.

The main areas of Kindergarten Readiness Skills are:

- Gross and Fine Motor Skills
- Social and Emotional Learning
- Language and Communication
- Pre-Literacy
- Numeracy
- Executive Functioning/Cognitive Skills
- Independence and Self-Care
- Approaches to Learning

The following pages will review what these skill areas entail, why they are important, and how you can encourage development of these skills in your child prior to Kindergarten.



Gross & Fine Motor Skills

Gross motor skills refer to abilities that use large muscle groups in the arms, legs, and torso. Fine motor skills are the abilities that rely on small muscle groups in the hands and wrists.

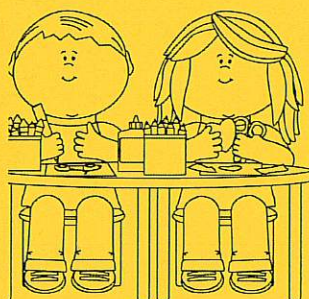
Gross motor skills are important in the development of core strength and stability and are used often in play and sports as well as various ways of sitting and moving in the classroom. They allow for greater exploration of the environment and surroundings, thus allowing for more experiences and learning. Fine motor skills are important in many aspects of the kindergarten day, including writing, drawing, coloring, grasping, cutting, eating, opening, and object manipulation.

Important Skills

- Balancing
- Walking on tiptoes
- Skipping
- Ability to sit crisscross applesauce on the floor and get up
- Holding a pencil
- Correctly holding and using scissors
- Opening lunch containers
- Zipping/buttoning clothes

Developing these Skills at Home

- Play with other children at a playground
- Develop age-appropriate obstacle courses
- Throw and catch a playground ball or beach ball
- Practice holding a pencil and drawing lines, shapes, and letters
- Color together as a family
- Use Play-Doh to create letters of the alphabet
- Practice using scissors by cutting Play-Doh
- String beads



Social & Emotional Learning (SEL)

Social and emotional learning refers to the process of helping children understand and manage their emotions, build positive relationships, and develop essential social skills that contribute to their overall well-being. In simpler terms, SEL for kindergarten students involves teaching them how to recognize and express their feelings, interact with others respectfully, and make good choices for success in school and everyday life.

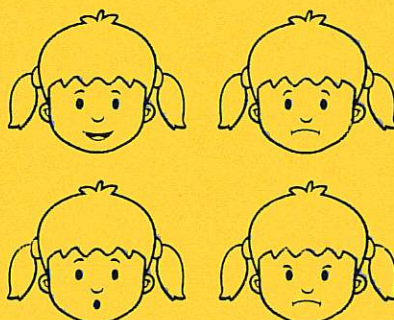
In the kindergarten classroom, SEL is often integrated into daily routines and activities such as circle time, storytime, and free play. Modeling positive behaviors and providing consistent guidance and encouragement at home is essential for young children to navigate kindergarten obstacles with confidence. Overall, SEL for kindergarten students lays the foundation for their social, emotional, and academic growth, setting them on a path toward success in school and life.

Important Skills

- Ability to identify different emotions
- Management/regulation of emotions
- Problem solving and communication with peers and adults
- Building relationships and empathy
- Self-confidence

Developing these Skills at Home

- Play emotion charades and guess each other's feelings through facial expressions
- Practice deep slow breathing, communicating, and counting when your child is having difficult emotions like anger or sadness
- Role play scenarios of taking turns, sharing, and asking for help - Board and card games are a great tool for role play
- Have play dates and encourage working together and kind words and actions (ex: thank you notes, helping with clean up, collaborative chores)
- Hold regular family meetings and meals where everyone gets a chance to say something that made them proud that day and something they are working on getting improving



Language & Communication Skills

Language and communication skills refer to the verbal abilities needed for classroom communication and expression. These skills include receptive language, or being able to understand what others are saying, and expressive language, or being able to articulate one's own thoughts, ideas, answers, needs, etc. These skills also include taking turns and listening to others.

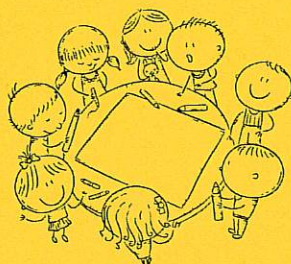
These skills are important for basic communication between the child, their teacher, and their peers. They are important for children's comprehension and learning as well as their ability to express this learning, ask questions, communicate needs and understanding. Language skills are also important foundational skills for learning how to read.

Important Skills

- Learning and using new words
- Listening, responding, taking turns, communicating, and having a conversation with others
- Asking for help and being able to communicate needs
- Ability to understand and follow classroom rules
- Understanding and acquiring new concepts and material
- Ability to describe items in detail
- Ability to talk about the events of one's day

Developing these Skills at Home

- Talk with your child whenever possible - about anything and everything!
- Have family conversations at mealtimes - practice taking turns talking and listening
- Talk about the events of each family member's day
- Model asking for help by asking your child for help with tasks
- Introduce new words by using them in your own vocabulary and explaining to your child what the words mean
- Play describing games where your child describes an item and you try to guess what it is, and vice-versa



Pre-Literacy Skills

Pre-literacy skills refer to the foundational abilities necessary to have in order to learn how to read. These skills include letter knowledge, phonological/phonemic awareness, concepts of print, vocabulary acquisition, and print/reading motivation. Letter knowledge refers to recognition of and ability to name the letters of the alphabet, as well as the knowledge that each letter has its own sound(s). Phonological & phonemic awareness pertain to the ability to recognize and manipulate language sounds. Concepts of print is the knowledge that print contains meaning, it is representative of things in our world, and it is organized in a certain way. Parts of a book and how we read print are also parts of print awareness. Vocabulary knowledge refers to the words we know and use in communication and reading. Print and reading motivation is the excitement toward, interest in, and enjoyment of reading and books.

These skills are important because they are precursors to reading and build a strong foundation for developing the ability to read print. Additionally, performance in these areas is highly predictive of later reading abilities as well as success in school.

Important Skills

- Being able to recognize and label each letter of the alphabet
- Ability to recognize and produce letter sounds
- Recognizing and producing rhyming words
- Knowledge of different parts of a book, how to hold a book, how to turn pages
- Being able to sit with an adult and enjoy listening to a read aloud of a book

Developing these Skills at Home

- Read aloud to your child every day
- Talk with your child about books while reading - how to hold them, turn the pages, etc.
- Have a variety of books available and accessible in your home
- Model enjoyment of reading by letting your child see you read for pleasure
- Play rhyming games with words or making up rhyming songs together
- Point out and read signs while driving/walking - focus not only on the words but also on beginning sounds of letters/words
- When encountering a new word in print or conversation, explain the meaning and talk about the word with your child



Numeracy Skills

Numeracy skills refer to basic math skills, the understanding of numbers, and the knowledge of how they represent the world. These skills are the foundations of later mathematical reasoning and ability. Early math readiness skills include understanding of quantity, counting, shapes, sizes, and comparison. They also include concepts of identifying patterns, matching and sorting, and recognizing the use of numbers in everyday life.

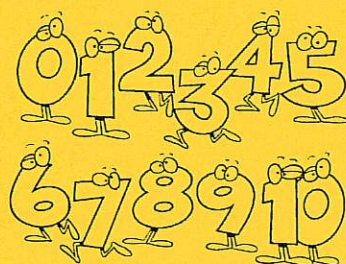
These skills are important because they allow for greater ability to interact with the environment and the understanding of world through number, patterns, and comparison. They also enhance children's mental capacity to understand later more complex mathematical thinking and concepts. They help promote creative thinking and problem-solving skills.

Important Skills

- Ability to label and recognize numbers
- Being able to count aloud
- Understanding that an object represents one, and each object in a set can be counted once and only once
- Ability to understand the concepts of size and comparison - bigger, smaller, taller, shorter, greater than, less than, etc.
- Recognizing basic shapes
- Being able to match and sort objects by different attributes - size, color, etc.

Developing these Skills at Home

- Count everyday items together when the opportunity is presented - food items when putting them away, toys, books, crayons, items on a shelf, etc.
- Play matching and sorting games - ask your child to sort things based on color, size, type, etc.
- Point out shapes of objects encountered in the home
- Point out numbers in the environment when encountered - on signs, in books, etc.
- Have your child help measure while cooking - talk about greater than, less than, etc.
- Use comparison and number vocabulary while driving/on a walk - what is bigger, smaller, how many, etc.



Executive Functioning/Cognitive Skills

Executive Functioning refers to a host of skills that are involved with cognitive control, problem solving, and behavioral control. They include the ability to attend and focus, self-regulate behaviors and emotions, plan and work toward goals, adapt to new situations, and problem solve.

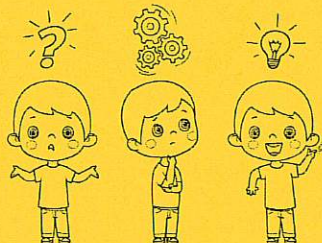
These skills are essential for optimal performance in school and have been shown to predict both reading and math skills throughout the school years. In kindergarten, these skills help children navigate the classroom environment and their school day. They are important not only for learning and understanding, but also being able to interact effectively with peers, teachers, and their surroundings.

Important Skills

- Ability to listen to directions, remember the directions, and complete the task
- Being able to sit quietly and pay attention during a read aloud
- Ability to adapt when plans or routines are changed
- Ability to control one's behaviors and emotions appropriately for a classroom setting
- Remembering and following daily routines
- Ability to follow rules
- Taking turns and working with peers

Developing these Skills at Home

- Play card and board games that require taking turns
- Talk about feelings/emotions and how to appropriately react to another person's emotions
- Establish simple morning and night routines that your child can independently manage and follow
- Storytelling - encourage your child to tell you a story or play a storytelling game where you make up a story together and take turns adding to it/telling different parts
- Cook together - follow a recipe and emphasize the importance of measuring, following rules, etc.
- Play movement games that require different responses, such as Simon Says, Freeze Dance, etc.



Independence & Self-Care Skills

Independence and self-care refer to the skills that are important for a child to develop in order to take care of oneself independently from an adult caregiver. These skills help children be able to manage themselves throughout the day in a classroom where the teacher's attention is divided among many children. They include simple personal hygiene skills, the ability to feed oneself, as well as the ability to work on and complete tasks independently.

These skills are important because they are basic to one's self-care and thus will be built upon throughout their school years. When transitioning into the school environment, it is important to be able to manage oneself and do things independently without constant adult attention and direction. It is also important to establish this independence because it builds self-confidence, self-esteem, and pride.

Important Skills

- Ability to use the restroom and wash hands independently
- Ability to cover one's nose/mouth when sneezing/coughing and ability to blow nose
- Getting dressed independently
- Being able to manage mealtime - feeding one's self, opening containers/bags, etc.
- Playing independently without adult direction
- Completing tasks without reminder to do so or reminder of directions

Developing these Skills at Home

- Encourage independence in your child during play, routines, etc. - Let them try to do things on their own and be generous with praise at each step
- Practice self-care and hygiene routines
- Have your child use utensils, open containers, and open bags at mealtimes
- Let your child dress themselves from start to finish - from choosing clothes to putting them on, fastening, etc.
- Have your child make self-care plans when going on outings - (ex: "We are going to the playground this afternoon, what all do we need to take with us?")
- Sing handwashing songs to practice this skill
- Play pretend - have your child pretend to be sick and show you how to blow their nose, cover their cough, etc.



Approaches to Learning

Approaches to learning involve creativity, curiosity, engagement and an enthusiasm for learning. These skills include being curious about the surrounding world and asking questions to learn more, enjoying the process of creating and coming up with new ideas, and actively participating when learning new material or skills. It also includes a positive attitude toward school and learning new things, as well as persistence, or willingness to keep trying even when tasks are difficult.

These skills are vital in order for children to become effective learners and active participants in the classroom setting. In order to learn optimally, children must want to learn and be engaged in the skills or content in which they are developing. When a child has a positive approach to learning, he/she is more likely to not only have better academic outcomes, but also enjoy school and the learning process more.

Important Skills

- Expressing interest in new things/topics/ideas and asking appropriate questions to gain more knowledge about these
- Engaging in imaginative play
- Interest in creating new things
- Ability to persevere when things are challenging
- Interest in school

Developing these Skills at Home

- Have positive conversations about school and ensure that your child understands what the school day will look like
- Visit the library and encourage your child to borrow some non-fiction books to learn about something in which they are interested
- Make time for arts and crafts - encourage independent creation by laying out materials and having your child make whatever comes to mind
- Encourage persistence when a task is difficult at home - don't immediately step in - encourage trying, different approaches to completion, and use praise when steps are accomplished
- Visit museums, parks, libraries, and other public areas of learning
- Take walks and ask questions together about the surrounding environment - research unknown things learn together

