

Off to a Good Start in Kindergarten

Helping my child get ready for kindergarten



As your child prepares to enter kindergarten, it is a time of great excitement and anticipation for the entire family.

The kindergarten year is one of the most important years in your child's school career; it is a time when attitudes toward school and learning are strongly influenced. A good kindergarten classroom provides a creative and stimulating environment where children can be excited about learning as they develop new skills. It is the foundation for the rest of the child's school experience.

Recognizing that parents are the most important people in young children's lives, we encourage you to help your child get ready for the kindergarten experience. Project Enlightenment has prepared this list of activities and ideas to help your child get off to a good start in kindergarten.

THINGS I SHOULD DO

Read to my child each and every day.

Provide books, magazines and other print materials for my child to handle.

Talk together about the pictures and story.

Provide opportunities to play alphabet games and read alphabet books.



Provide pencils, markers, and paper. Encourage drawing and scribbling or writing.

Invite my child to help with grocery lists, grocery shopping, sending cards.

Provide a daily routine that includes regular times for meals.

Establish a bedtime that gives my child ten or more hours of sleep at night.

See that my child has opportunities for rigorous physical activity, outside when possible, everyday.

Help my child select and wear clothing appropriate for indoor climate and outdoor weather conditions.

See that my child has had required immunizations and current health examination.

Help my child develop independence in dressing, eating and personal hygiene.



Take my child to a variety of places such as the library, the park, the grocery store, and the post office and talk about what we see.

Provide toys, games and household objects that encourage exploration, manipulation and dramatic play. Play with my child using the materials.

Encourage problem-solving skills.

Use language that incorporates math such as "how many" and "what if I add one more..."

Teach ways to communicate needs and desires in a socially-appropriate way.

Provide opportunities to play with other children and form relationships.

Teach socially acceptable ways to disagree.

Encourage social values such as helpfulness, cooperation, sharing and concern for others.

Demonstrate common expressions of courtesy and praise my child for using them (thank you, please).

Establish reasonable limits for behaviors and hold my child to them.

Talk with my child about other cultures in our community.

Encourage work values such as initiative, persistence, and completion of tasks.

Interact frequently with my child each day by talking and listening.



Off to a Good Start in Kindergarten

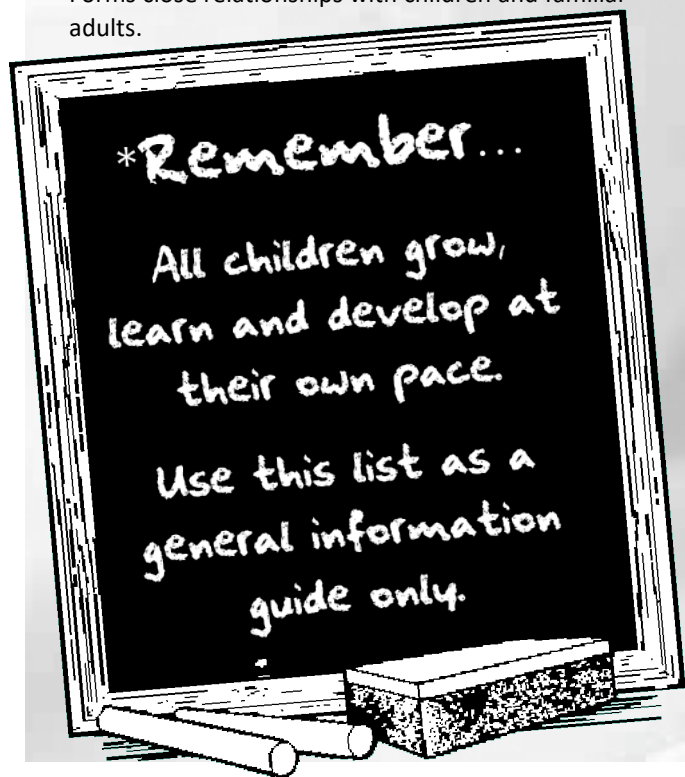
Widely held expectations for children entering kindergarten

Approaches to Learning

- Is curious and confident in ability to learn.
- Enjoys exploration and discovery through play.
- Asks questions to find out more about an interest.
- Expresses self creatively through music, movement, and art.
- Takes initiative when appropriate.
- Pays attention to task for short period of time (approximately 15 minutes).
- Persists with tasks even when difficult.

Social and Emotional Development

- Plays cooperatively and participates appropriately in a group.
- Follows basic rules, routines and adapts to small changes.
- Demonstrates some degree of independence and can separate from parents.
- Works to solve conflict and seeks adult help when needed.
- Respects people and property.
- Begins to identify and express own feelings appropriately.
- Begins to understand other's feelings and intentions.
- Forms close relationships with children and familiar adults.



Language Development and Communication

- Knows many vocabulary words in own language.
- Uses sentences of several words.
- Speech is understandable to unfamiliar adults.
- Asks and answers when, where, why and how questions.
- Follows 1, 2, 3 step directions.
- Recognizes rhyming words and similar sounds.
- Understands that words can be spoken and written.
- Recognizes familiar alphabet letters (knows letters of own name).
- Is interested in books/stories and can retell a story when read aloud.
- Can tell about an experience.

Health and Physical Development

- Has had vision/hearing screened.
- Has had all required immunizations.
- Receives medical care when sick.
- Receives dental check-ups regularly.
- Eats a balanced diet and gets ten to twelve hours of sleep at night.
- Can run, jump, climb, swing and throw balls.
- Demonstrates self-help skills such as independent use of toilet, eat unassisted, snap, button, zip or belt own clothes, blow nose, cover sneeze, wash hands, etc.
- Holds scissors appropriately and cuts.

Cognitive Development

- Identifies self with first and last name.
- Knows basic colors.
- Has awareness of self and family.
- Draws picture of self.
- Understands that actions have consequences.
- Understands simple science concepts.
- Demonstrates good problem-solving skills.
- Understands 1-1 correspondence in counting.
- Names some numbers and rote counts to 10.
- Names some shapes (circle, square, triangle, rectangle).
- Can informally measure things (which is longer?).
- Understands spatial concepts (up and down).

Adapted from NC Foundations for Early Learning and Development