Getting Ready For Kindergarten

“Children with more preschool experience displayed fewer stress behaviors during the early weeks of Kindergarten…Children with a good, developmentally appropriate preschool background will have more success in Kindergarten than children who attend a preschool that stresses academics.” ("Kind. Readiness" Coop. Extension Fact Sheets #3).

As children progress through their four year-old year, parents begin to wonder what their child will be doing next year. Will they benefit from another year in Pre-School, or are they ready to go right into Kindergarten?

While your child’s age is a considering factor, there are many other vital signs that parents should be aware of as they plan for a foundation of successful learning socially, emotionally, and academically.

**Behavioral/Social Skills:**
- Child can demonstrate self-control with body movements. Keep hands to himself while in line and during group time.
- Child can sit quietly during a short story.
- Child is learning to respect other students: playing cooperatively, and having positive peer interactions.
- Child participates in clean-up activities.
- Child verbalizes his frustrations rather than physically acting out.
- Child attempts to complete tasks.
- Child chooses a free choice activity and maintains his /her involvement in this activity.
- Child can work independently.

**Self Help Skills:**
- Child uses appropriate bathroom skills.
- Child can dress self.
- Child is learning to take responsibility for own belongings.
Language and Listening:

- Child can verbalize his/her first and last name, address and phone number.
- Child can complete a two-step simple direction.
- Child can share an idea, experience, or description.
- Child has heard a variety of stories and has participated in follow-up discussions.
- Child practices accepted patterns of speech, and should speak clearly enough to be understood.
- Child can engage in a socially appropriate conversation.
- Child can participate in informal creative dramatics.

Math Skills:

- Child can count 1 to 6.
- Child can demonstrate 1 to 1 correspondence with concrete objects up to his/her age.
- Child has had experience with identifying two objects in terms of large/small, tall/short, more/less.
- Child can recognize similarities such as color/size, and shape.

Large Muscle Skills:

- Child can identify general body parts.
- Child has had experience with skipping, jumping, swinging, hopping, etc.
- Child has had experience throwing and catching balls.
- Child has had experience in block building.
- Child has had experience in painting at an easel.

Small Motor Skills:

- Child has been encouraged and tries to grip crayons/pencils correctly.
- Child has had frequent experience cutting with scissors and holding scissors correctly with scissor thumb oriented up.
- Child has had experience playing with clay.
- Child has had experience playing with puzzles.
- Child is able to use a zipper, and button.

Writing and Spelling:

- Child recognizes his/her first name.
- Child tries to write his/her first name using lower case letters with an upper case letter at the beginning.
- Child can copy, draw, and reasonably trace a line and a circle.

Other:

- Child can identify and name eight basic colors.
- Child has had tactile experiences with water, sand, clay, rice, etc.
- Child has had experience singing the alphabet song.

“...between birth and age five are the foundation upon which successful lives are built.”
- Laura Bush, July 2001