

READY FOR SCHOOL

South Carolina's Profile of the Ready Kindergartner

All children are ready to benefit from a quality kindergarten experience when they are 5 years old by September 1 of that school year. But kindergarten readiness is more than a matter of age. South Carolina's Profile of the Ready Kindergartner describes the physical, cognitive, social and emotional signs that a child is prepared for school success.



THE READY KINDERGARTNER, with engaged support from parents, caregivers, and community, has developed the skills and abilities necessary for achievement at age-appropriate levels. He/she is physically, socially and emotionally prepared to benefit from a quality kindergarten experience.

APPROACHES TO LEARNING & INQUIRY



- Demonstrates eagerness to learn
- Shows curiosity through questioning
- Shows creativity and imagination through pretend play
- Engages in daily opportunities for play and exploration
- Shows willingness to try new things
- Persists in tasks that are challenging
- Maintains attention
- Applies learning to new situations
- Solves problems with materials at hand
- Use senses and observations to learn about the world around them

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT, SELF-HELP & MOTOR SKILLS



- Moves with control and balance while walking, running, jumping and climbing
- Uses fingers to control small objects, such as pencils/crayons, scissors, buttons and zippers
- Uses hand-eye coordination to perform simple tasks, like putting together a puzzle
- Independently performs self-help tasks such as toileting, hand washing, tooth brushing, and dressing

DEVELOPED BY:



LANGUAGE & LITERACY DEVELOPMENT



Listening, Speaking & Understanding

- Converses with others, taking turns speaking and listening
- Speaks clearly, expressing ideas and questions
- Uses words to seek help, answer questions and solve problems
- Speaks in complete sentences of at least six to eight words
- Listens to stories and retells them
- Begins to ask questions about stories that are read aloud
- Follows directions and completes tasks that require multiple steps
- Asks and answers 'how' and 'why' questions

Early Reading

- Shows interest in books and reading
- Holds books upright, turning pages one at a time from front to back
- Knows that printed words have meaning
- Uses pictures in a text to tell and retell the story
- Recognizes and names/reads familiar signs and logos
- Listens to a story being read aloud
- Makes predictions about what will happen next in a story being read aloud
- Begins to follow text from left to right as it is read aloud
- Recognizes and names rhyming words
- Recognizes that letters represent spoken sounds
- Recognizes some upper and lower case letters and their sounds
- Recognizes that spoken words can be represented in written language
- Recognizes written name as well as other familiar words
- Begins to use pictures and text read aloud to learn the meaning of unfamiliar words

Early Writing

- Draws pictures and tells their story
- Writes using a combination of letters, letter-like shapes and scribbles
- Uses drawing and writing during play
- Writes name independently or using an example

MATHEMATICAL THINKING



Number Sense

- Counts in sequence up to 20
- Counts up to 10 objects, using one number for each object
- Recognizes up to five objects in a group without counting
- Compares sets of objects (*more than* or *less than*)
- Describes and compares objects by size (*big* and *small*), length (*long* and *short*) and weight (*light* and *heavy*)
- Understands and uses the terms *first*, *second* and *third*

Matching, Sorting, Classifying

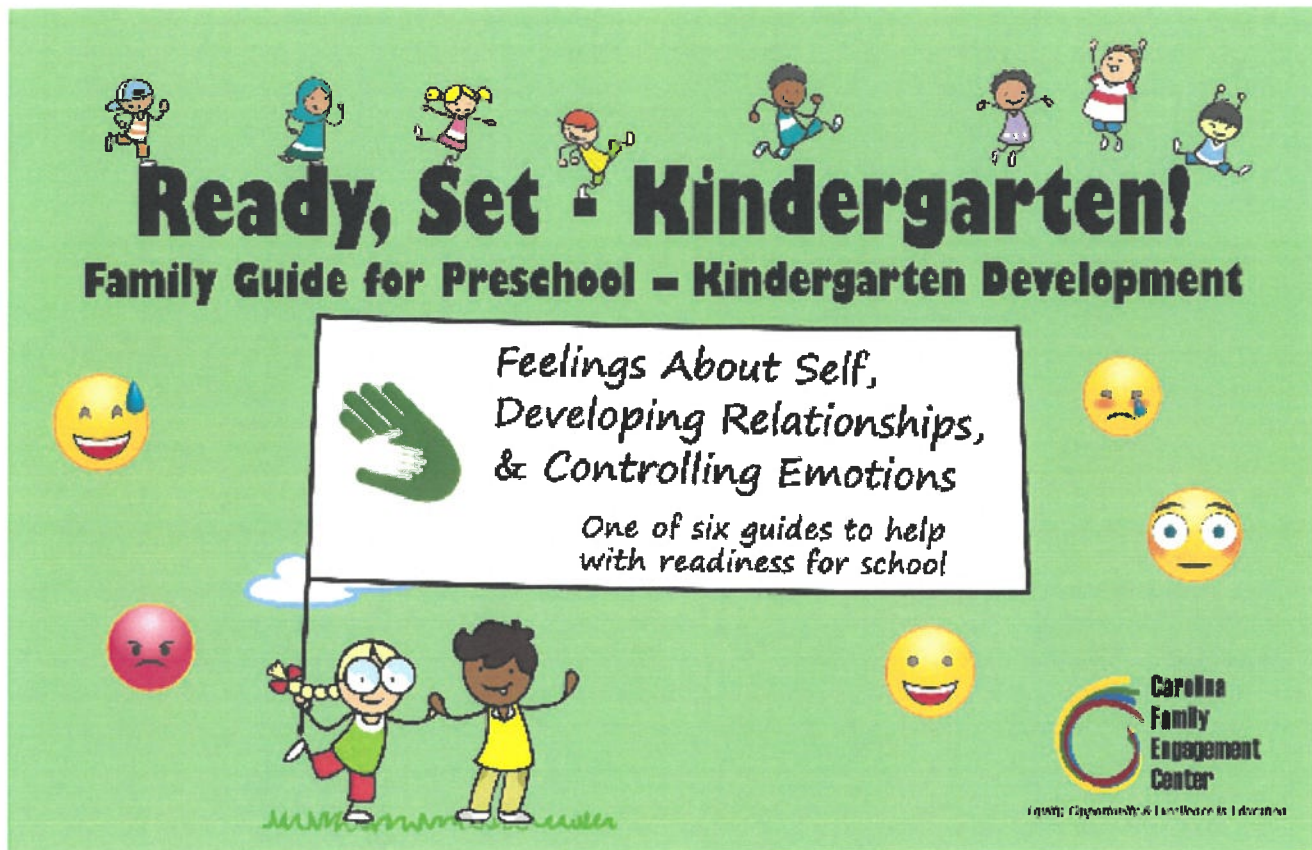
- Recognizes and draws basic shapes, such as circle, square and triangle
- Recognizes and repeats simple repeating patterns, such as triangle, square, triangle, square
- Describes positions of objects by using the terms *above* and *below*
- Sorts and classifies up to 10 objects into categories

EMOTIONAL & SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



- Shares, takes turns and plays well with others
- Expresses emotions through appropriate actions and words
- Follows simple rules and directions
- Adjusts to changes in routine and environment
- Shows self-control
- Shows caring and understanding of others' feelings
- Interacts with familiar adults
- Respects the property of others
- Resolves conflicts using words and adult support
- Makes friends

Free services and resources are available to help parents, caregivers, and communities get children ready for school. Visit **SCFIRSTSTEPS.ORG**.



Readiness is not just ABCs or counting or knowing colors. Families need to be aware of ALL areas of their child's development – physical, emotional, language, and thinking. A child's emotional and social development is a critical part of their development. A child's social and emotional skills are the foundation of academic learning. The ability to sit, concentrate, share, and control one's temper all contribute to learning.

For preschoolers and kindergartners, the highest form of research and learning is through play. When working on different aspects of emotional and social development, make it fun!



Families provide a child with their very first opportunities to develop a relationship, communicate, and interact. As a caregiver, you model how to relate to the people around you. Readiness for school is developing a child's willing attitude and positive view of learning new things, not just gaining knowledge.

The more you know, the more you can help your child grow and gain readiness for school.

Six areas of growth and experience help children progress and succeed, research tells us.

SIX AREAS OF GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT



The individual way each child learns
(Approaches to Play and Learning)



Feelings about self, developing relationships, and controlling emotions
(Emotional and Social Development)



Their motor development, nutrition, health/safety
(Health and Physical Development)



Gaining the basics for reading, writing, and speaking
(Language Development)



Exploring shapes, patterns, numbers, comparisons
(Mathematical Thinking)



Learning to think, make decisions, solve problems
(Cognitive Development)



This guide is one of six that offers a brief introduction to each area and provides a sample of the experiences and skills children need to be prepared to move through preschool, at three-, four-, and five-years of age.

All adults caring for children wear many hats. You must be a playmate, nurse, cook, coach, and teacher. This document is designed to help by giving:

- Examples of the experiences and typical range of skills your child should learn and be able to do at each level of development as they learn about emotions and relationships.
- Activities to help your child at home.
- Additional resources for information and help.

Every child progresses at a different rate and so the developmental indicators included here describe what a child generally achieves by the END of each age level.

These experiences and skills are drawn from the South Carolina Early Learning Standards (https://www.scchildcare.org/media/55097/SC_ELS-second-edit.pdf) and the South Carolina College- and Career- Ready Standards (<https://ed.sc.gov/instruction/standards-learning/>).

Both guidelines were developed by numerous experts in learning, based on years of research, and after review and comment by the public.





Developing a Sense of Self



Children who develop a positive sense of self are more likely to try new things and work toward reaching goals. They tend to accept new challenges and feel more confident about their ability to handle problems or difficulties that they encounter.

These Ready, Set steps include:

Age 3 Preschool	Age 4 Preschool	Age 5 Kindergarten
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Describe themselves (what they look like, things they can do, things they like or own). ● Express a sense of belonging to a group (such as "There's Kim from my class." "I'm a boy."). ● Choose activities they like and name their favorite activities. ● Indicate positive feelings about themselves by showing and/or telling others about themselves, things they like, or things they have done. ● Express the belief that they can do many things. ● Try new activities and attempt new challenges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Describe themselves in greater detail and accuracy (such as "My eyes are brown." "I'm tall." "I like baseball."). ● Express awareness that they are members of different groups (such as family, school, church). ● Choose to spend more time on preferred activities, and express awareness of skills they are developing. ● Indicate positive feelings about themselves by showing and/or telling others about themselves, things they like, or things they have done. ● Express the belief that they can do many things. ● Stick with tasks even when they are challenging. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Show a willingness to learn new games and try new skills. ● Identify personal connection to places (such as home, school, neighborhood, town). ● Define "feelings" they are having (such as happy, sad, angry). ● Name healthy ways to express needs, wants, and feelings. ● Continue to participate/practice in activities after being unsuccessful in initial attempts.
		




Developing a Sense of Self with Others



The social skills and relationships children form with others are important for their overall development. Through positive relationships with adults, preschool children learn to understand and care about others and develop skills that help them adjust to the demands they encounter when they are older.

These Ready, Set steps include:

Age 3 Preschool	Age 4 Preschool	Age 5 Kindergarten
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Seek out trusted teachers and caregivers as needed (for emotional support, physical help, social encounters, problem solving, and approval). ● Given time, form positive relationships with new teachers or caregivers. ● Show ease and comfort in their exchanges with familiar adults and ask for assistance. ● Form and maintain friendships with a few other children. ● Be at ease and comfortable in the interactions with familiar children. ● Show awareness that their actions affect others (walk carefully around a child's block building). ● Work to solve conflicts, with guidance and support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Seek out trusted teachers and caregivers as needed (for emotional support, physical help, social encounters, problem solving, and approval). ● Over time, form positive relationships with new teachers or caregivers. ● Use language effectively to continue conversations with familiar adults and to influence their behavior (ask for help, ask an adult to do something). ● Form and maintain friendships with other children of many different backgrounds and abilities. ● Have conversations with other children and influence another child's behavior (plan a game, decide how to share a toy). ● Balance their own needs with those of others in the group. ● Use different approaches to solve problems and conflicts with increasing independence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Explore and create meaning through conversation, playacting, questioning, and storytelling. ● Create and use longer sentences. ● Practice taking turns, listening to others, and speaking clearly. ● Explain personal ideas and build on the ideas of others by answering and relating to the comments. ● Participate in conversations with different partners about topics and texts in small and large groups.
		










Learning About Feelings



Children learn to manage their feelings and impulses during their early years. Preschoolers' ability to regulate and manage emotions is still developing and it is not unusual for them to sometimes have difficulty controlling their feelings and expressing their emotions fittingly.

These Ready, Set steps include:

Age 3 Preschool	Age 4 Preschool	Age 5 Kindergarten
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Express a range of emotions (happy, sad, fear, anger, disgust, shame, guilt, satisfaction, love) with their face, body, sounds, and words.● Use different words or signs to more clearly express and manage feelings.● Describe reasons for their feelings ("I'm sad because my friend is leaving." "That makes me mad when you do that.").	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Express a range of emotions (happy, sad, fear, anger, disgust, shame, guilt, satisfaction, love) with their face, body, sounds, and words.● Independently manage and express feelings effectively most of the time.● Give reasons for their feelings that may include thoughts and beliefs as well as events (such as "I'm happy because I wanted to win and I did.").	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Define the term "feelings" (happy, sad, angry).● Name healthy ways to express needs, wants, and feelings.● Explain ways to identify trustworthy adults to tell when someone is in need of help, feels threatened, or has been harmed.
    	 	



Learning At Home



Your child's temperament plays a big role in how they respond, express their emotions, and relate to others. What worked with one child may not work with another as you help your preschooler learn to better deal with their feelings and those of others. Here are a few suggestions for working with your child:

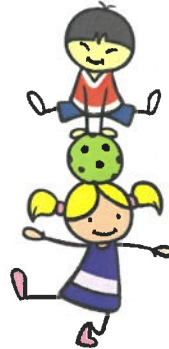
- Let your child know you are interested in their activities. Adults are so busy; they can often rush by without hearing what their child has to say or wants to do. Your interest builds your child's feelings of self-worth and you are modeling the behavior you wish them to display.
- Give your child some "tools" for handling his or her emotions in a positive way. Such tools can make it easier for the child to cool down and address the issue.
- Help your child to recognize their emotions. Draw different faces on paper, plastic eggs, throwaway cups or whatever (happy, sad, confused, embarrassed, angry, proud). Have them choose the face that matches how they feel.
- Develop a way for them to release negative feelings by squeezing a small ball or pounding play dough.
- Make a list with your child of the actions they can use to relieve their feelings of frustration (such as: read a book, draw, take a bath, run around outside).



- Make a sock puppet for your child to tell their troubles to. Sometimes it is easier to talk to an object than with an adult.
- Let your child help with chores. Sorting and folding socks, putting up toys, getting the forks for dinner are some ideas to get you started. The task may not be done as fast or as well as you do it, but the responsibility and the helping are good lessons for your child.
- When your child's behavior is unacceptable be sure to separate them – as a person – from their behavior. Instead of calling them "bad," describe the behavior that was wrong. This will clearly separate the action from the person and help maintain your child's sense of self worth.
- Work with your child as they learn to play and work with others.
- Suggest, when appropriate, that they turn to playmates for assistance or to get answers to their questions: "Your blocks didn't go high enough? Why don't you go ask Allen? He just built a really high building."
- Ask the preschooler to imagine how their behavior might affect others: "I saw you grab the doll from Amy. How do you think that made her feel?"



Encourage your child and friends to work together. "Kesha and Trish, will both of you please clean up the painting things?" "Why don't the two of you help me move these boxes?"



Additional Information



If the ideas suggested above aren't your style, take a look at Kiddie Matters for its 100 suggestions: <https://www.kiddiematters.com/100-social-skills-activities-preschoolers/>.

What about controlling your temper so you are a good example? Take a look at this blog for some causes and ideas: <https://www.welcome-to-the-woods.com/learn-to-control-your-temper/>.

The website We Do Listen has 15 fun action cartoons on such topics as managing anger, telling the truth, getting along with others. Find the lessons at <https://wedolisten.org/lessons>.

Here is an article for working with an overly emotional child: <https://www.verywellfamily.com/how-to-help-an-overly-emotional-child-4157594>.

There are many apps for your computer or smartphone that will help you and your child consider feelings, friendships, and relationships. Try "[Breathe, Think, Do with Sesame Street](#)," "[iTouchLearn Feelings for Preschool Kids](#)," and "[Peppy Pals Social Skills](#)." They are free.

This site lists apps specifically for children with disabilities, but all children can benefit from the listed sites: <https://www.edutopia.org/blog/social-emotional-apps-special-ed-jayne-clare>. Note – most of these apps carry a fee from 99 cents to \$3.



Additional Information



For an excellent discussion of social development between 3 and 5, go to <https://www.webmd.com/parenting/preschooler-social-development#1>.

Another good review is located at <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/preschool/Pages/Social-Development-in-Preschoolers.aspx>.

The Center for Disease Control has an entire website discussing various parenting skills. Start at <https://www.cdc.gov/parents/essentials/index.html> for information on communicating with your child, using time out, creating structure, giving directions, and using consequences.

Your public library has dozens and dozens of picture books to help and guide your child on most social-emotional areas. Such areas as sharing, empathy, shyness, and persistence are just a few of the topics addressed in books you can use to work with and amuse your child. For some suggestions, go to <https://childhood101.com/books-about-emotions/> for 16 book titles. With your older child, you can use the books to begin conversations about emotions and behavior.



Equity, Opportunity & Excellence in Education

The Carolina Family Engagement Center is located in and coordinated through the University of South Carolina's SC School Improvement Council (SC-SIC) in the University of South Carolina's College of Education. Contact them at <https://cfec.sc.gov/> or 1-800-868-2232 or 1-803-777-7658.

Carolina Family Engagement Center
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5 SIMPLE IDEAS FOR BEDTIME ROUTINES

1 Say “good night” to screens as early as possible in the evening.

Avoid screens at least 30 minutes before bedtime. Screens interfere with the brain’s ability to settle down and go to sleep.

2 Do your bedtime routine in the same order each night.

Young children love knowing what to expect. It helps them feel safe and secure. Over time, having an order to your bedtime routine (bath, pajamas, brushing teeth, a bedtime story) signals to your child’s brain and body that it’s time to go to sleep.

3 Create a calming environment.

Turning off screens, quieting your house, and focusing your attention on bedtime (instead of your phone) helps your child to relax and prepare for rest.

4 Make sure part of your bedtime routine feels like a reward for your child.

Snuggles, a bedtime song, a favorite book to read aloud – these are some of the best gifts you can give your child at the end of the day. They will begin to look forward to this special time with you and you can be grateful for the cuddles.

5 Don’t build an entire routine at once.

Start with one new thing at a time. If you don’t have a consistent bedtime routine, just choose one new thing (like turning off screens earlier) at a time. Once you and your child have gotten used to this, add in another thing (like an earlier bedtime) the next week. Keep going until you have a successful routine that works for your family.

Did you know that most kindergartners need 10-12 hours of sleep daily? Early and consistent bedtimes can help make your child happier, healthier, and better prepared for school success!

Learn more at SCFirstSteps.org



7 THINGS KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS WANT PARENTS TO KNOW

1 Parents are the first and most important teachers.

Kindergarten teachers are honored to join the team of educators in your child's life. They appreciate being welcomed as an important partner in your child's development.

2 When families and teachers work together, children benefit.

Research has shown that when families are involved, children do better academically and socially. Feel free to ask your child's teacher to give specific ideas and strategies to make learning fun at home.

3 Communication is key.

Kindergarten teachers can use different methods to keep in touch with parents. Let your teacher know the ways to communicate that are best for you and your family.

4 Teachers want to know what makes your family unique.

Teachers work better in partnership with parents when they know the qualities and values that make your family unique. Please tell us what makes your family special and about any family changes and challenges at home that might affect your child at school.

5 Kindergarten teachers want the first days and weeks of kindergarten to be happy and comfortable times for everyone.

Be sure to contact your child's soon-to-be school and learn how to register for kindergarten the summer before school starts.

6 Your child will have opportunities to show their independence in kindergarten.

Talk about and encourage your child to express needs and wants and to try to do tasks on their own. In kindergarten, mistakes are okay—this is how we learn.

7 Know that your attitude and actions can affect your child's confidence in kindergarten.

Even saying, "I know you can handle it" and "you did it!" can go a long way. Let your child know you admire their courage and willingness to try.



GETTING TO KNOW MY CHILD

A Guide for my Child's Kindergarten Teacher

Child's Name:

ABOUT MY CHILD

My child's favorite things:

Color:

Food:

Book:

Game/activity:

Toy:

Other Favorites:

My child's strengths are:

My child is afraid of:

Quick Information



- Name and relationship of person completing this form:
- My child likes to be called:
- Child's birthday:
- Parent(s) Name:
- Other adults living in the home:
- Phone number:
- Email address:
- Preferred method of contact:
- Best time to reach me:

My Child Likes to: *(check all that apply)*

Listen to stories

☐

Play alone

☐

Draw and color

☐

Play outside

☐

Play with other children

☐

Play quietly

☐

My child does not like to:

I want you to know this about my child:

My child learns best by:

Call our **Family Information Center 1.800.578.8750** Para Español: **1.888.808.7462**

My child's learning experiences at age 4:



My child is not enrolled in any program ☐

My child has been enrolled in: _____
from _____ to _____
(date) (date) (name of preschool or program)

Child care center ☐ Parents as Teachers ☐ Family Child Care ☐ Home ☐ Other ☐

ABOUT OUR FAMILY

We speak the following language(s) in our home:

There are _____ children in our home.

Things I would like for you to know about our family:
(culture, activities we do together, special practices)

Screenings & Assessments

	Date(s)	Results
Hearing Screening		
Vision Screening		
Developmental Assessment		

My child receives these supports and special services:

- If your child does not receive any special services, check here: ☐

	Received Last Year	Receives This Year	Day/time of week	Should Receive
Occupational Therapy (OT)				
Physical Therapy (PT)				
Speech and Language				
Social Skills				
ABA				

Please describe any other health needs: _____

Do you have any concerns about your child's development, learning, and/or behavior? If so, explain.
