

Get Ready for Kindergarten!



It's never too early to get ready for Kindergarten!

Starting school is an exciting time for children and families – the information in this packet can help you both get ready for that milestone day. It's designed for 3-, 4-, and 5-year-olds as they prepare for kindergarten.

Use this as a guide for fun ideas. Include family members and friends in the activities. Remember that play is an important part of learning. Your child learns best when they are spending time with you or other caring adults and doing activities that are fun and interesting.

Children develop at their own pace and 'typical' development can vary greatly from child to child.

School readiness is much more than knowing letters and numbers. Children who are ready for kindergarten have good social, self-help, and physical skills, and are developing a love of learning.

Kindergarten Readiness Checklist

This checklist is designed to help prepare your child for school. It's best to look at the items on the list as goals to aim for. If your child has not achieved some of these, don't worry. Remember that each child grows and develops at different rates.

Good Health and Physical Well-being

My Child:

- ☐ Eats a balanced diet
- ☐ Is able to toilet independently
- ☐ Gets plenty of rest
- ☐ Receives regular medical and dental care
- ☐ Has had all the necessary immunizations
- ☐ Runs, jumps, plays outdoors, and does other activities that provide exercise and help develop large muscles
- ☐ Puzzles, scribbles, colors, paints, and does other activities that help develop small muscles

Social and Emotional Preparation

My Child:

- ☐ Is learning to explore and try new things
- ☐ Is learning to work well alone and independently
- ☐ Has many opportunities to be with other children and is learning to cooperate with them
- ☐ Is curious and motivated to learn
- ☐ Is learning to finish tasks
- ☐ Is learning to use self-control
- ☐ Can follow simple instructions
- ☐ Helps with family chores
- ☐ Is learning to use words to identify and express emotions

Language and General Knowledge

My Child:

- ☐ Is read to every day
- ☐ Has many opportunities to talk and to listen
- ☐ Has access to books and other reading materials
- ☐ Is learning about print and books
- ☐ Has screen use monitored by an adult
- ☐ Is encouraged to ask questions
- ☐ Is encouraged to solve problems
- ☐ Has opportunities to notice similarities and differences
- ☐ Is encouraged to sort and classify things
- ☐ Is learning to write their name and address
- ☐ Is learning to count and plays counting games
- ☐ Is learning to identify and name shapes and colors
- ☐ Has opportunities to draw and be creative
- ☐ Has opportunities to listen to music, make music, and dance
- ☐ Has opportunities to get first-hand experiences and do things in the world – to see and touch objects, hear new sounds, smell and taste new foods

Read Together Every Day

- ★ Store your child's books in a special place that's easy to reach, such as a basket, drawer, or low shelf.
- ★ Place a small rug or pillow nearby to create a comfortable space for reading.
- ★ Get a library card for your child (and yourself, if you don't already have one).
- ★ Find a place to read together away from distractions.
- ★ Hold and snuggle your child as you read to help develop a positive attitude toward reading.
- ★ Children enjoy and learn by repetition, so it's OK if they want you to read the same books over and over.
- ★ Talk about the story as you read.
- ★ Ask questions and point out details in the pictures.
- ★ Ask your child to retell the story in their own words.
- ★ Talk about characters as you read together.
- ★ Count out loud with your child every day while reading, cooking, and shopping, etc.



Good books for 3-, 4- and 5-year-olds

- **Help Wanted, Must Love Books** by Janet Sumner Johnson, Illustrations by Courtney Dawson
- **The Book Hog** by Greg Pizzoli
- **One Day in the Eucalyptus, Eucalyptus Tree** by Daniel Bernstrom, Illustrations by Brendan Wenzel
- **Stacey's Remarkable Books** by Stacey Abrams, Illustrations by Kitt Thomas
- **No Buddy Like a Book** by Allan Wolf, Illustrations by Brianne Farley
- **This Book Will Get You to Sleep!** by Jory John, Illustrations by Olivier Tallec
- **I Do Not Like Books Anymore!** by Daisy Hirst
- **The Summer Nick Taught His Cats to Read** by Curtis Manley, Illustrations by Kate Berube
- **The Snatchabook** by Helen Docherty, Illustrations by Thomas Docherty
- **Hip-Hop Lollipop** by Susan Montanari, Illustrations by Brian Pinkney
- **Wonder Walkers** by Micha Archer
- **From Head to Toe** by Eric Carle
- **Together We Ride** by Valerie Bolling
- **You Are a Lion and Other Fun Yoga Poses** by Tae-eun Yoo
- **Move Your Mood!** by Brenda S. Miles, Illustrations by Holly Clifton-Brown
- **Spunky Little Monkey** by Bill Martin, Illustrations by Brian Won
- **Is Everyone Ready for Fun?** by Jan Thomas Library Day!
- **It's a Tiger!** by David LaRochelle, Illustrations by Jeremy Tankard
- **City Shapes** by Diana Murray, Illustrations by Bryan Collier
- **The Gift** by Alain Serge Dzotap, Illustrations by Delphine Renon
- **Pete the Cat: Crayons Rock!** by Kim Dean, Illustrations by James Dean
- **Beach Toys vs. School Supplies** by Mike Ciccotello
- **The Day the Crayons Quit** by Drew Daywalt, Illustrations by Oliver Jeffers
- **A Squiggly Story** by Andrew Larsen, Illustrations by Mike Lowery
- **Red: A Crayon's Story** by Michael Hall
- **Monster Trouble** by Lane Fredrickson, Illustrations by Michael Robertson
- **Linus the Little Yellow Pencil** by Scott Magoon Eraser by Anna Kang, Illustrations by Christopher Weyant
- **Bathe the Cat** by Alice McGinty, Illustrations by David Roberts •
- **Every Little Letter** by Deborah Underwood, Illustrations by Joy Hwang Ruiz
- **Did You Take the B from My _ook?** by Beck Stanton
- **LMNO Peas** by Keith Baker
- **Look** by Fiona Woodcock
- **Let's Go ABC!: Things That Go from A to Z** by Rhonda Gowler Greene, Illustrations by Daniel Kirk
- **Oops, Pounce, Quick, Run!** by Mike Twohy
- **Out the Door** by Christy Hale
- **Too-Small Tyson** by JaNay Brown-Wood, Illustrations by Anastasia Magloire Williams
- **Room for Everyone** by Naaz Khan, Illustrations by Mercè López
- **Crash! Boom! A Math Tale** by Robie H. Harris, Illustrations by Chris Chatterton

Calendar of Activities

Play a matching game or match items you have around the house	Play a board game or card game with your child	Count out loud with your child while reading, cooking, or shopping	Practice fire safety: stop, drop, and roll	Have a dance party	Take your child to the library and get a library card and books	Help your child write their name
Visit www.pbs.org and click on Fun and Games	Practice writing numbers 1 to 25	As you pick our fruits and vegetables at home or at the store, have your child name the colors	Draw a picture and talk about it – write down what your child says	Talk about your day at dinner	Count how many red clothes you have	Look for things that begin with the letter P
Cut out picture from magazines	Play with ice cubes outside – watch how fast they melt	Read a book together and ask your child to retell the story	Help your child write their name and identify each letter	Teach your child their phone number and address	Name all the foods on your plate and discuss favorites	Put together a puzzle with your child
Make a fort indoors and read books in it	Play I Spy for colors	Practice zipping and buttoning clothing	Find words that rhyme with me	Play a freeze game or Stop and Go	Have your child invite a friend over to play	Practice naming opposites, like up/down, on/off, etc.

Tips and Hints

Seven positives: Did you know it takes seven positive comments on average to balance the effect of just one negative comment? Saying ‘good job’ isn’t always enough – be specific and tell your child exactly what was good. For example, “Wow, that is the largest tower of blocks I have seen you build. You worked really hard on it, and I like the columns.”

Do you feel like you’re being watched? You are! The best way to help children learn how to act is to show them through your own words and actions. They are master imitators and you are their first teacher. When they hear you say please and thank you, they learn to be polite. When they see you help others, they learn to be helpful. So don’t just tell your child what to do – show them!

Thanks for the memories. Chances are your own happy memories revolve around things you did with those you love. Really enjoy your child by taking time to have fun together every day. Sing songs while making dinner or driving the car. Take a walk and look for ducks or interesting sticks. Play ball, play house, play cards, play ANYTHING – just do it together!

YOU are the best reward. When your child does a good job or learns a new skill, reward them with your time and attention. Avoid using treats or toys as rewards or bribes. Time with you is free and builds bonds that last a lifetime.



Tired of saying ‘no’ all the time? Try switching it up and giving your child positive directions. Tell them what to do instead of what not to do. Say ‘keep the water in the bathtub’ instead of “no splashing” or “use your quiet voice” instead of “don’t yell.” This sets a more positive mood and your child is more likely to follow directions happily.

Routines aren’t boring – they’re healthy. Children feel more secure when they know what to expect. Keep a basic structure to your day. An evening routine might include setting the table, eating dinner, playtime, bath time, snack, tooth brushing, three stories, ten kisses and lights out! When children know what’s coming next, it’s easier for them to cooperate and you avoid a lot of temper tantrums.

Love you, love me. Taking care of yourself makes you a better caregiver. Find a little quiet time each day to do something for you. Find a hobby, read a book, soak in a bubble bath. Develop healthy habits for you and your family. Love yourself and your child by engaging in healthy, safe adult relationships.

The waiting game. Waiting is hard for all of us, but especially for children. Sometimes waiting can’t be avoided, so be prepared with a “bag of tricks.” Carry a bag with a notebook, colored pencils, a small handheld game, books, simple snacks like raisins or crackers, and a juice box or water bottle. Keep a few simple songs in your head like Itsy Bitsy Spider or ABCs, make up a story, or just count the change in your pocket or purse. Time flies when you are BOTH having fun.

School Tools

- ★ Decide on simple rules for using drawing and writing tools, “Markers may be used at the kitchen table or outdoors.” Or “Scissors are for cutting paper.”
- ★ Draw pictures together about family events, daily experiences, etc.
- ★ Praise your child’s efforts. Perfection is not the goal. Display some of their work and change it from time to time.
- ★ Plan a healthy meal together.
- ★ Make a grocery list together.
- ★ Label belongings with your child’s name.
- ★ Encourage your child to use the tools to write a letter if they are interested in writing.
- ★ Practice how to hold scissors, how to open and close them, and how to hold the paper.
- ★ Try snipping thin paper first, or even play-doh or plastic straws.



Get Moving

- ★ Save plastic water or soda bottles to use as bowling pins.
- ★ Toss bean bags or socks in a basket.
- ★ Balance books on your head while walking.
- ★ Visit a safe outdoor space so you can run and play together.
- ★ Play toss and catch together with a rubber ball.
- ★ Set up an obstacle course (inside the house or out). Run through it or steer a tricycle/bike through it.
- ★ Teach your child games like “Hokey Pokey,” “Red Light-Green Light” and “Simon Says.”
- ★ Suggest your child try to move like different animals: hop like a rabbit, slither like a snake, fly like a bird.



Letters and Words

- ★ Use an uppercase letter followed by lowercase letters when writing your child's name. For example, "Matthew."
- ★ Make a name card for each member of your family. Help your child place them at the dinner table where everyone sits.
- ★ Use letter magnets on the refrigerator or a cookie sheet to spell their name and other familiar names.
- ★ Place alphabet letters in a container. Pull them out one at a time and name them.
- ★ Read alphabet books and allow your child to name the letters they recognize.
- ★ Read a book together then ask your child to go back and look for a certain letter of the alphabet found in the story.
- ★ Write the alphabet on paper. Sing the ABC song slowly and have your child touch each letter as you go.

Math is Everywhere!

- ★ Talk about math. Use words such as more/less; longer/shorter; heavy/light; etc.
- ★ Count out loud every day. Start at 1 and count as you walk, put plates on the table, add apples to your grocery cart, or as they wash their hands. Ask your child to count with you. Pause and ask, "What number comes next?"
- ★ Hold up 5 fingers in front of your child then quickly hide your hand. Ask, "How many fingers did you see?"
- ★ Name and describe shapes when you see them. "That is a square napkin. The box of cereal is a rectangle. That tire is a circle."
- ★ Count: "Let's count the blocks."
- ★ Compare: "Which plate has more crackers?"
- ★ Explore: "Let's go on a shape hunt – can you find circles?"
- ★ Question: "I wonder how many cars we can fit in this basket?"
- ★ Sort: "Let's put all the yellow pieces in this pile."



Thoughts and Feelings



- ☐ Turn off the music or screens in the car and talk about where you are going, what you are going to do, and what might happen when you get there.
- ☐ Turn off the TV and put down the phone at meal times. Talk about what you did or are going to do today.
- ☐ As you read together, ask your child to tell you what they see in each picture.
- ☐ Ask your child to predict what will happen before you turn the page.
- ☐ Ask your child to draw you a picture and then tell you about what's happening in it.
- ☐ Model sympathy and caring for others: "Dad isn't feeling well. Let's make him some soup."
- ☐ Talk about situations and how they might make people feel happy, sad, frustrated, angry, scared, etc.
- ☐ Encourage your child to talk about and label their feelings.
- ☐ Teach calming techniques when you see your child becoming upset. "Stop, take a deep breath, relax," "Count to 10," etc.



Rhyme Time

- ☐ Introducing children to rhymes and rhyming words and playing with them gives children a head start in reading and spelling.
- ☐ Read rhyming books and stories with your child. After you've read one a few times, ask your child to complete the rhyme with the correct word, such as: "Hickory, Dickory, Dock. The mouse ran up the _____."
- ☐ As your child becomes more familiar with the rhymes, encourage them to join in and say parts of the rhyme themselves (it will take a while before they can recite whole rhymes independently).
- ☐ Remember that nursery rhymes are portable, they can be enjoyed anytime, anyplace, anywhere! Share them at bath time, when getting ready for bed, while cooking or in the car.
- ☐ Change words to make your own personalized rhymes, for example, "Nye and Jill went up the hill" or, "Nia had a little lamb...."



Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

- ★ Cut out pictures or gather items that go together and ask your child to match: shoe & sock; flower & vase; car & tire; fork & spoon, etc.
- ★ When your child becomes frustrated while playing a game or playing with a friend, refrain from jumping in and solving the problem. Instead, ask questions and guide your child by asking “How did that happen?” and “What can you do differently?”
- ★ Ask your child for their opinion on simple problems such as, “Should we wash the car or take a walk?” Then follow up with “Why?” Or in the grocery store ask, “Chicken or fish for dinner?”
- ★ Hide common objects from the house in a box or bag. Ask your child to close their eyes and reach inside. Don’t pull the item out but feel it and try to guess what it is.
- ★ Cook in the kitchen together and ask questions as you mix and stir and bake. “What will happen when we add this milk to the flour?” “What will happen to the frosting when I add this drop of food coloring?”



Frequently Asked Questions

At what age do children start Kindergarten?

Monomoy's policy is to admit a child into kindergarten if he/she is 5 years of age on or before September 1 of the school year in which they enroll.

Where will my child go to Kindergarten?

Students attend elementary school in their town of residence. A child may attend a different elementary school if the parent/guardian applies for and is accepted for school choice. The application for intradistrict school choice can be found on the Monomoy website at www.monomoy.edu/school-choice. The availability of intra-district school choice is dependent upon kindergarten enrollment at each of the schools and the availability of slots.

What types of transition activities are available for children transitioning to Kindergarten?

Each elementary school offers transition activities which may include ice cream socials, practice bus rides, orientations, or other opportunities to tour the building and learn about school procedures. Once your child is registered for Kindergarten, you will receive information about these activities.

How will my child's elementary school learn about their needs?

Kindergarten screenings take place in the spring at each elementary school. During the screening, children will participate in brief, informal assessments. The information gained will help the school make classroom placement decisions.

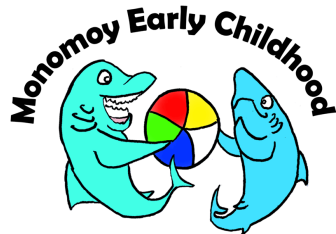
What changes will my child experience when they move from preschool to Kindergarten?

Changes from preschool to Kindergarten include: a full day of school, slightly larger class sizes, specials, lunch in the cafeteria, and recess with larger groups of children. Kindergarten classes have assistants who help support the students.

What type of special education services are available at each elementary school?

Children who receive special education services have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) which details exactly what services he/she will receive. Special education staff includes: Special Education Teachers, Physical Therapist, Occupation Therapist, Speech and Language Pathologists, School Psychologists, School Adjustment Counselors and Special Education Assistants.

Resources for families



Family Resource Center

Monomoy Early Childhood Family Resource Center
www.monomoy.edu/early-childhood-resource-center



Cape Cod Children's Place
<https://capecodchildrensplace.com/>



MASSACHUSETTS
**Department of
Early Education and Care**

Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care
<https://www.mass.gov/orgs/departments-of-early-education-and-care>

YMCA Cape Cod
<https://ymcacapecod.org/>

Monomoy Community Services
<https://www.monomoy.org/>

Eldredge Public Library, Chatham
<http://www.eldredgelibrary.org/>

Chatham Community Center
<https://chathammyrec.com/info/default.aspx>

Brooks Free Library, Harwich
<http://www.brooksfreelibrary.org/>

Harwich Community Center
<http://www.harwich-ma.gov/community-center>



MONOMOY
REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT



YOUTH RESOURCE CARD

Emergency: 911

Chatham Police: 508-945-1213
Harwich Police: 508-430-7541
Chatham Fire: 508-945-2324
Harwich Fire: 508-430-7546
Poison Control: 800-682-9211
Suicide Hotline: 800-273-8255
Children's Emergency Services: 508-778-4627
Dept. of Children and Families:
508-760-0200 (after hrs 800-792-5200)
Family Resource Center: 508-778-1980
Barnstable Health & Human Services:
508-375-6628
Harwich Youth and Family Services:
508-430-7836
Lower Cape Outreach: 508-240-0694
Monomoy Community Services: 508-945-1501

Behavioral Health

Mobile Crisis Team: 800-229-2683
Bay Cove: 800-981-4357
Gosnold: 508-540-6550
Cape & Islands Emergency Services: 833-229-2683
Dept. Mental Health 24 hr. crisis: 877-382-1609

Sexual Assault

Independence House: 508-771-6507
Children's Cove: 888-863-1900

Homelessness

Housing Assistance Corp: 508-771-5400
Duffy Health Center: 508-771-9599
Homeless Prevention Council: 508-255-9667
Community Action Committee: 508-771-1727

Kindergarten Registration Information

All children living in Chatham or Harwich who will be 5 years old by September 1, 2024, are eligible to enroll in Monomoy's Kindergarten programs at Chatham Elementary School or Harwich Elementary School. Online registration can be found at <https://www.monomoy.edu/kindergarten-registration>. If you do not reside in Chatham or Harwich, you must apply as a School Choice student at <https://www.monomoy.edu/school-choice>.



Get Ready for School!

- ☐ Before the first day of school, choose school supplies and label them.
- ☐ Play school together and take turns being the teacher.
- ☐ Eat a meal from a lunchbox or tray. Show your child how to open milk/juice cartons and lunch items, as well as how to clean up when they're done.
- ☐ Visit your child's school and explore the classroom and playground.
- ☐ Talk about the kinds of things they will be doing at school.
- ☐ Two weeks before school starts, adjust your child's bedtime to fit the school schedule.
- ☐ Create a healthy routine that allows time for family meal, homework, play, bath, teeth brushing, and a bedtime story.
- ☐ Have them practice buckling and unbuckling their seat in the car.
- ☐ Practice zippers, buttons, opening a backpack, putting on tennis shoes. Not all children have mastered shoe-tying by the first day of school and that's OK. Just remember to practice once in a while.



Contact Information

To learn more about Kindergarten in Monomoy Regional School District:

Visit the MRSD Website at www.monomoy.edu



Visit the Monomoy Early Childhood Resource Center at www.monomoy.edu/early-childhood-resource-center



Call Chatham Elementary School at 508-945-5135

Call Harwich Elementary School at 508-430-7216