

Kindergarten readiness

Going to kindergarten is a big step for children ... and for parents. This booklet lists some examples of basic skills that have been recognized as contributing to success in school. If your child cannot do every item on the list, it does NOT mean that he or she isn't ready for kindergarten. Every child who is five years old by his or her school district's deadline can enter kindergarten.

Personal Care/Skills

- Tells first and last name
- Can dress themselves (use zippers, buttons, etc)
- Practice good hygiene (use the toilet, wash hands, blow nose by themselves)

Social Skills

- Follows simple directions
- Separates easily from parents
- Asks for help appropriately
- Handles emotions appropriately
- Plays well with others
- Helps put toys away

Fine Motor Skills

- Holds pencil firmly enough to write
- Uses scissors
- Can assemble a puzzle with interlocking pieces

Memory

- Sings a simple song
- Says or sings alphabet correctly
- Identifies colors (basic eight: red, blue, green, yellow, orange, purple, black, brown.)

Number Sense

- Counts to 10
- Recognizes some numbers
- Counts objects 1-5
- Names some shapes (circle, triangle, square, rectangle)

Early Literacy Skills

- Identifies first name
- Holds a book correctly and turns pages
- Knows what print is for and shows interest in books and in words around him (Such as by asking what signs or labels say)
- Hears and makes rhymes
- Retells a simple story
- Names basic opposites

Parental Support

- Provides support at school and at home
- Ensures appropriate attendance
- Maintains communication with teachers and school

What your child needs to enroll:

- ❑ Social security card
- ❑ Birth certificate
- ❑ Immunization records
- ❑ A physical (Call the school where your child will attend to find out if there is a specific form you need to have signed. It is a good idea to get your child's physical done early- before August.)

It is a good idea for your child to have a dental, hearing, and vision check-up before beginning school.

Helpful phone numbers:

ChildCare Aware of Eastern KS (for childcare information)	785-357-5171
Shawnee County Infant-Toddler Services	785-506-8616
Shawnee County Health Department	785-251-5600
Social Security Administration	888-327-1271
Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library	785-580-4400
United Way of Greater Topeka	785-273-4804

Free screenings available

Contact your local school district if you are concerned about your child's development or would like to have him or her screened.

Each school performs FREE screenings called "Child Find" screenings on children ages birth to 5 years and can offer you support and free services if needed. Most schools will check developmental progress, vision, and hearing during the screening.

Activities to do together

Promoting kindergarten readiness at home does not mean creating an academic setting and formal teaching. You can take advantage of opportunities that arise in daily life to help your child be ready for kindergarten. Often, these are unplanned, casual acts, like commenting on words or an article of clothing or engaging your child in conversation. At other times, it is a conscious effort to read good books with your child or to provide toys that promote good readiness skills. Listed below are a few activities that will encourage your child to develop skills that will assist them in preparation for the beginning of the kindergarten year.

Activity	Personal Care/ Skills	Social Skills	Fine Motor Skills	Memory Skills	Number Sense	Early Literacy	Parental Support
Read to your child! Pick stories that help develop skills, such as books about counting, colors, or the alphabet. Read books about specific life situations that your child can relate to. While reading a book together, ask your child questions to help her think about what is being read.	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
Encourage your child to label feelings and emotions (sad, happy, angry, confused, etc.) and encourage him to use words to express and resolve conflict.		✓					
Have organized play activities, songs, and dances that involve listening to directions, “Simon Says” and “Hokey Pokey” are good examples. Teach your child to say the directions a couple of times in order to remember them.		✓	✓				
Encourage your child to put on and take off her own shoes and jacket and use the bathroom on her own.	✓	✓					
Introduce your child to a wide variety of paper, writing utensils, and other supplies. Encourage your child to scribble and produce pretend writing.	✓		✓		✓	✓	
Talk about colors in everyday situations. (ex. Can you hand me the blue piece of paper?) Give your child color choices. (ex. Do you want the red or green cup?)				✓			
Ask your child to give you a specific number of items. Have your child tell you how many things he wants, such as “How many cookies do you want? One or two?”					✓		
When driving in a car or taking a walk, look for a specific shape and list everything you see with that shape.					✓		
Use your child’s first and last name daily when talking to them. Help your child find the first letter in their first name. Identify the letters in print around them.	✓						

Activity	Personal Skills	Social Skills	Fine Motor Skills	Memory Skills	Number Sense	Early Literacy	Parental Support
Provide child-size scissors (Fiskar) to practice cutting. Supervise closely. Let your child build with some blocks, Legos, puzzles, and play dough.			✓				
Sing nursery rhymes with your child.		✓		✓		✓	
Watch TV programs, such as Sesame Street, with your child and learn songs with him.	✓			✓		✓	

Areas of Development

Personal Skills are those skills that your child possesses to take care of his or her personal needs. They include dressing, tending to toileting needs, and taking care of personal items. If your child can recognize his name and his items are labeled, he will be better able to keep track of his things at school and retrieve an item when asked.

It is helpful when a child can write her own name to label her work. Some teachers encourage parents to teach their child to write his name in all lower case letters with the first letter of the name capitalized instead of using all capital letters. This way he will not have to relearn how to write his name.

Social Skills are developed as your child plays in groups and observes models of good behavior. Social skills include how your child plays with and relates to other adults and children, how she expresses her feelings, and how well she can listen.

Fine Motor Skills are those skills that require the use of the smaller muscles in the hands and require good eye-hand coordination. Your child needs good fine motor skills to hold a writing utensil well enough to write and also to use both hands independently of each other, such as when holding and moving a paper in one hand while cutting the paper with scissors in the other hand.

Memory Skills help your child recall such things as the letters of the alphabet and the names of colors. Helping your child develop a strong memory helps to ensure that she will organize and store the information she learns in such a way that she can recall it later to build on it in the learning process.

Number Sense includes being able to count and also being able to understand how many there are of something. It also includes an understanding of the basic shapes.

Early Literacy Skills are those skills that prepare the child to learn how to read. Literacy is the basis for our learning - we use it to learn everything from math to science to music. If your child cannot read the questions on a test or read the print in a textbook, she will have a hard time learning in school.

Parental Support is as important as all of the other areas listed. Children who have parents who are supportive and who are active in their schools do better in school.

Where to go for help

Below you will find numbers to call for general public school information and phone numbers to call specifically for screening information.

Auburn-Washburn USD 437

Administration Office and
Screening Information: (785) 339-4000

Rossville (Kaw Valley Schools) USD 321

Superintendent's Office and Screening
Information: (785) 437-2254

Seaman USD 345

Seaman Education Center: (785) 575-8600
Screening Information: (785) 286-7103

Shawnee Heights USD 450

Superintendent's Office and Screening
Information: (785) 379-5800

Silver Lake USD 372

Superintendent's Office and Screening
Information: (785) 582-4026

Topeka Public Schools USD 501

Burnett Administrative Center: (785) 295-3000
Screening Information: (785) 438-6899