

Kids In Motion Pediatric Therapy Services Kindergarten Readiness Outline

There are some important skills that children should have when starting Kindergarten so they can progress appropriately. This is an outline on what physical development, social & emotional development, language development, and cognitive development your child needs to be successful in school and the different learning styles that children have.

Physical Development

Physiological:

1. Sleep is the first key factor. Children 3-5 years old should sleep **10-13 hours per day** (including naps).

- **Sleep environment:** Cool, quiet, dark, red colored night lights, noise machine
- **Sleep routine:** Establish a consistent routine, allow your child some choices
- **Limit screen time**

2. Proper child nutrition should usually include eating **three meals a day and two nutritious snacks**, limiting high-sugar and high-fat foods, eating fruits, vegetables, lean meats, and dairy.

- **Mix veggies into meals:** shredded or pureed veggies in spaghetti sauce, veggie “fries”, cauliflower mixed into rice, etc.
- **Continue to introduce (and re-introduce) vegetables:** always give your child a tiny serving of everything you are eating, encourage, but don't force them to try.
- **Lead by example:** your child will be interested in foods that you are eating
- **Make it fun:** let your child pick out a vegetable to try at the grocery store, let them help prepare and serve it to the rest of the family, use fun dips like cheese, ranch, or hummus.

What Fine Motor Skills Will My Child Need for Kindergarten?

- Copying shapes and writing name
- Holding a pencil correctly
- Using scissors
- Building with blocks
- Puzzles
- Dressing and feeding themselves



How To Practice Fine Motor Skills:

- **Dressing:** Your child should be able to dress themselves and might need some help with fasteners and tying shoes. Play dress up for low pressure opportunities to work on dressing skills.
- **Projects:** Use scissors, glue, playdoh, to create projects with your child. Don't forget about beading projects!
- **Manipulation games:** such as 'Pick up Sticks' and 'Connect 4', Sneaky Snacky Squirrel, and Operation.
- **Multisensory learning:** writing in the sand, using sidewalk chalk, writing in shaving cream.
- **Grasp:** If your child is not yet using a tripod grasp, try rock crayons, Triangle crayons, pip squeak markers.
- **Using different tools:** Use tongs and tweezers to pick up small items, have your child help in the kitchen with stirring and pouring ingredients.

What Gross Motor Skills Will My Child Need for Kindergarten?:

- Navigate the playground
- Maintain appropriate posture and balance
- Hand eye coordination to play catch
- Running, jumping, and skipping
- Riding a tricycle



How To Practice Gross Motor Skills:

- **Playgrounds!** Climbing any and everything.
- **Obstacle courses using household objects:** use furniture, pillows, and blankets to create areas to crawl on, under, and through.
- **Play catch:** Using a ball the size of a kickball, try to catch the ball using hands only from short distances- present arms with elbows bent and palms facing inward rather than arms extended and palms up.
- **Hopscotch:** hopscotch works on hopping, jumping, balance, and coordination.
- **Ride a tricycle or bike.**

Social & Emotional Development

Social and Emotional Development:

- Taking turns, waiting, sharing
- Navigating Friendships
- Showing Empathy
- Not being afraid of failure





How To Teach Social Emotional Skills:

- **Respond don't react:** "We have a problem, Charlotte wants the toy, and so does Tony. What can we do?"
- **Offer suggestions:** Taking turns for example. "Charlotte plays for 1 minute and then Tony plays for 1 minute."
- **Be an example:** You can play a big role in helping your child develop social emotional skills.
- **Deal with big emotions:** Talk your child through emotional situations. "I can see that you are feeling frustrated, can you tell me why you feel that way?"
- **Positive reinforcement:** Children repeat behaviors for which they get attention. Catch them being good and reward them for it.
- **Teaching it's okay to fail:** Allow your child to make mistakes and not criticize, instead ask open ended questions about what he or she might do differently next time.

Other Social Emotional Activities:

- Arrange playdates, approach children at the park.
- Complete projects that require collaboration or taking turns. (Washing the car, cooking, playing a board game, etc.)
- Read books about emotions and expressing emotions with words to give your child the vocabulary to express emotions and explore ways to deal with them.
- Establish daily routines. Create routines that are predictable but flexible.

Language Development

What Language Skills Will My Child Need?:

- Speak in complete sentences and be understood by others most of the time.
- Use words to express needs and wants.
- Understand two-step directions.
- Make comparisons and describe relationships between objects like big/little, under/over, and first/last.

How To Develop Language:

- Read to your child
- Ask who, what, when and why questions about books or other daily activities.
- Have conversations with your child. Discuss preferred topics and ask open ended questions.
- Explain things to your child to build connections in the brain.
- Describe things to your child to increase vocabulary.



Other Fun Language Activities:

- **Play telephone:** You can work on greetings, carrying a back and forth conversation.
- **Sing lyrics of rhymes and songs:** Use songs with actions that go along with the songs. (Patty cake, hokey pokey, the wheels on the bus, etc.)
- **Follow directions:** Play games like Simon Says, don't forget to let your child have a turn being "Simon." Or make up your own following directions game.
- **Role playing:** Pretend to be a teacher or play house. Include as many related words as possible.
- **Function fame:** Ask your child about the function of different objects. (What does a pencil do? What do we use a towel for?)

Cognitive Development

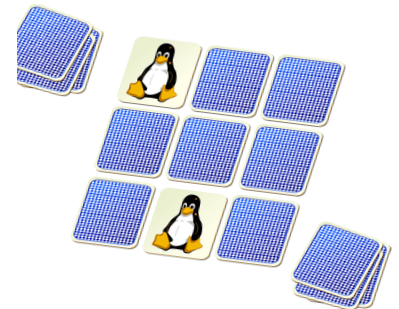
What Cognitive Skills Will My Child Need For Kindergarten:

- Questioning
- Problem Solving
- Memory
- Number Sense
- Letter Recognition



Academic Skills:

- Touch & Count
- Recognize and write letters and number
- Recognize name in print
- Sort items by shape, size and color



Cognitive Activities:

- **Letter Identification Games:** Fly swatter letter hunt, matching uppercase and lowercase, identifying letters in a book or on a sign.
- **Counting Games:** Games like putting the correct amount on the number crafts, parking lot numbers, counting with snacks.
- **Memory Games:** Memory card game, what's missing?, magic cup game.
- **Problem Solving Games:** Tangrams or puzzles, go fish, tic tac toe. Encourage and Allow your child to help with multi-step tasks and chores like cooking, cleaning and gardening.
- **Classifying & Grouping:** Sort toys by color or size. Separate the laundry. Classify and sort out the toys in your child's bedroom.



Learning Styles

Children's Learning Styles:

- Visual (Learn through seeing)
- Auditory (Learn through hearing)
- Tactile (Learn through touch)
- Kinesthetic (Learn through doing and moving)



Providing your child with various approaches to learning is important to help your child learn in the way that is most effective. It may be easy to pinpoint how your child learns early or your child may benefit from learning through many different approaches.

Approaches to Learning:

- **Sensory:** Make sure you are fostering all areas of learning. Give your child opportunities to use their senses, including getting messy. For example, if you are working on writing your child's name, give them a visual of what it should look like. Auditory, Read the letters out loud. Tactile, let them write in sand or shaving cream or make the letters out of playdoh. Kinesthetic, draw the letters in chalk on the driveway or use a toy car to drive over the lines of the letter.
- **Encourage:** Reward effort instead of outcome. For example, compliment your child on hard work and persistence. Instead of saying "You're so smart", say "You stuck with that problem and figured it out". Don't criticize or over correct your child's work or play. Encourage them to solve problems on their own instead of doing it for them.
- **Explain:** Explain everything to your child, narrate what they are doing. If you are playing catch with a ball, say "That's a big, blue ball. It's bouncy and smooth. Can you throw it to me? Great catch!"
- **Provide Experiences:** It doesn't have to be a costly experience like going to the zoo or taking dance lessons. It can be as simple as having lunch in the park or going for walks in your neighborhood and talking about what you see, gardening or cooking together, visiting the library, collecting leaves, and so much more. As you are exposing your child to different experiences, you are explaining and describing things along the way.

**Have Concerns about your child's development?
Take our Online Developmental Screener or call our
office to schedule a free 15-minute phone
consultation with one of our therapists!**

(248) 684-9610

www.KidsInMotionMI.com



Pediatric Therapy Services