

Four Year Old Program

A note from the Administration

Can you believe it? Your child has been on this earth for less than five years and now you are faced with tough decisions that will affect the next 14 years (possibly 18 years) of their lives! We understand this time in the life of a parent can be intimidating and overwhelming. We empathize with your desire to give your child the best education coupled with the greatest learning experiences possible.

For that reason, we have set high standards for our teaching staff. We require them to stay current in their professional development ensuring your child receives age appropriate learning experiences. Our staff reviews the concepts, skills and developmental needs essential for your child's growth throughout their preschool years. The teaching staff creates and implements lesson plans that are fun and appropriate to promote advancement of your child's knowledge of God along with their developmental needs.

We believe our ministry provides a proper marriage of spiritual, mental, social, physical, and emotional activities that provide an enjoyable introduction to "Big School" while allowing them to be preschoolers.

We have compiled a collection of information about the needs, learning abilities and characteristics of Four-Year-Old children along with the developmental concepts and skills your child will be learning in the upcoming school year.

If you have any questions after reading this issue, please feel free to request a meeting with your child's teacher or with the ELC Administration.

Our goal is to help you feel more confident in your decisions regarding your little ones future and we will do anything we can to help you make the best decision for your child.

May God be blessed in all we do.

The Church at Brook Hills Early Learning Center Administration

Our Philosophy

The overall reason for the Early Learning Center is to serve as a ministry of The Church at Brook Hills. We also exist to provide support to you and your family. We do this by providing, for your child, a biblically based, age appropriate education in a safe, loving, Christian environment.

Our philosophy of education for the ELC is based on God's plan for educating children according to the scriptures. That is why we call it "Biblically Based". We are not simply referring to the fact that our curriculum includes Bible stories, verses, songs and activities – which it does.

In Deuteronomy 6:6-9, we read "These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up...."

We believe this tells us a young child learns best through repetition while involved in various activities. A young child learns to eat, walk, and talk through everyday activities. She also learns social skills, values, and truths about God through daily opportunities to observe others and to practice these skills in a variety of ways. Thus we have Learning Centers, Group Time, Playground Time, Lunch time and all the other opportunities for children to learn and practice new skills while involved in activity.

We strongly believe that when provided with a variety of activities and materials from which to choose, each young child learns and develops his own God-given uniqueness.

Each child receives, through our program, a foundation that helps him develop mentally, physically, morally/spiritually, socially and emotionally through age-appropriate creative and educational activities provided by loving, Christian teachers.



"Lord, give us the children of the world in such a way that only You receive the glory"

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Learning About Four-Year-Olds

What Basic Needs Does a Four-Year-Old have?

- **unconditional love** as a valuable, worthwhile child of God
- **acceptance** as a unique, lovable person, even when behavior is unacceptable
- **security** which comes from a consistent schedule and a sense of family belonging
- **protection** from the hazards of his environment and from his ignorance of the hazard
- **independence and freedom** to do for himself
- **guidance** in developing the ability to behave appropriately
- **control and limits** so he can learn inner control
- **faith** which comes from living with adults who love God and respect biblical truths

How Does a Four-Year-Old Learn?

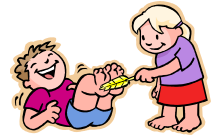
- Expression of curiosity leads to high levels of interest and involvement
- Use of the senses allows four-year-olds to absorb information about their world
- Participating in first hand experiences with real objects allows for learning through doing
- Repetition, or doing something over and over again, gives children opportunities to become confident, competent learners
- Demonstrations by adults and older peers leads to language learning and social, emotional, and spiritual growth
- When satisfaction occurs and preschoolers experience joy in learning, they are motivated to learn more
- Play provides an opportunity for young children to learn at their own level of interest and skill

The most powerful avenue of learning for preschoolers comes as they experience the giving and receiving of love

What Characteristics Does a Four-Year-Old Have?

Social & Emotional Development

- is confident (brags)
- is exuberant and aggressive
- expresses feelings which are sometimes out of control
- is sometimes disruptive
- may be uncooperative
- likes to talk
- likes to laugh (sense of humor)
- is learning to take turns
- sometimes bosses playmates



Physical Development

- shows good large muscle control—hops, gallops, balances
- shows small muscle development—buttons, laces, snaps, cuts, paints, draws
- has boundless energy
- is quiet for only short periods



Intellectual Development

- is eager to learn
- is curious (asks how and why)
- confuses fantasy with reality
- uses 500 to 2,000 words
- can say words she cannot understand
- thinks on a literal level
- has difficulty with time and distance concepts

Spiritual Development

- forms concepts about God from relationships with significant adults
- may know some Bible stories and songs
- can show love and help others
- may know that God and Jesus love him
- may know that God made people



Building Self-Esteem

- Teaching them they are created by God. They are unique and special to Him (Gen. 1:27; Ps. 139:13-17)
- Giving them unconditional love (Matt. 19:14)
- Showing them respect (1 Peter 2:17)
- Being a good listener
- Providing limits that are reasonable and understandable to the children
- Giving them opportunities to succeed. Being sure the tasks are challenging, but not frustrating. Building a sense of "I CAN"
- Helping them be responsible for making choices
- Developing problem solving skills. When possible, letting children work out their own problems
- Knowing the individual needs of each child
- Risk taking is encouraged. A child feels accepted and secure enough to write in an unconventional and different way from adult writing. He will spell words the way he thinks they are spelled or the way the sound instead of relying on an adult for the "correct" spelling.
- Accomplishments are celebrated
- A sense of family or community is present among children and teachers
- Children are given warm, friendly touches to help them know they can trust and depend on their teachers
- Children are encouraged and supported in their differences. Differences make us unique. Doing a task in their own way shows respect.
- Pleasure and pain are viewed as equally valuable experiences. (For example, if a pet dies, teachers do not whisk it away in the night. Children are allowed to participate in the pain that comes with death)
- Respect for others is valued. Teachers demonstrate respect for children by listening to them, considering their opinions, and incorporating them into the plans.
- Learning experiences meet a child's developmental needs and are planned with his interests in mind
- When talking with a child, the teacher uses conversation which encourages rather than judges (For example, Judging: "I like your painting." Encouraging: "You worked a long time on your painting and chose beautiful colors. What do you like about your painting? I see what you are talking about when you say...") Judging statements evaluate a child's work or behavior. Encouraging statements accept a child as she is and help her develop an appreciation for her work and her behavior. These statements empower children to use language to explain and describe their creative thought process. An attentive adult validates a child's work.

The time we spend building self-esteem in preschoolers today is a lifetime investment. The words we say and the way we treat young children form their memories tomorrow.

Guiding Behavior

- Using positive statements with children
- Providing choices and commending children when they make wise ones
- Involving the children in establishing classroom rules. Keeping them short and understandable
- Being sure children understand the consequences of breaking rules
- Teaching problem solving skills
- Being active listeners
- Being consistent, firm and always kind
- Avoid asking why
- Anticipating problems before they occur
- Ignoring inappropriate behavior when possible
- Knowing the children
- Using methods of discipline which help the children develop self-discipline
- Using logical consequences and choices when a child misbehaves
- Ignoring the misbehavior when it is just a minor disturbance and is not destructive or dangerous
- Structuring the environment
- Telling the children what we want him to do rather than what he cannot do
- Planning time for the children to use the basic materials in their environment
- Being consistent
- Planning time for loving and for giving attention
- Offering choices when they exist
- Providing "alone time" when a child hurts another child or has a temper tantrum
- Giving a few minutes advance notice before changing activities
- Modeling the behavior we expect from the children
- Knowing our children



Strategies for Stimulating Language Growth

Stimulating Verbal Expression

- Provide opportunities for children to talk about experiences and materials with friends, teachers, and other adults in large and small groups
- Schedule times for discussions relating to planning and evaluating work
- Listen
- Use meaningful conversation more often than regulatory comments when talking with a child
- Show-n-Tell
- Plan times when small groups of children can explore a new idea, material, or object with a teacher
- Take walks around the room, around the inside of the building, around the school. Go on field trips away from the school. Discuss everything the children see, hear, smell, touch, and experience
- Use the senses to explore an object. Provide opportunities for children to tell how it feels, sounds, smells, looks and tastes (when appropriate)
- Use a variety of finger plays and action rhymes to allow the enjoyment of the rhythm words
- Provide a good language model

Developing Listening Abilities

- Invite children to participate in group meetings. Encourage them to discuss plans, evaluate work periods, describe an original project, or discuss social problems which affect the whole group
- Provide a good example by listening to the children when they talk to us
- Give the children opportunities to listen and respond to recordings of their voices, environmental sounds, stories, instrumental music and activity songs
- Play games such as "Mother, May I?" and "Simon Says"

Helping Children Understand the Conventions of Print

- Provide opportunities for children to hear terms such as *letter*, *word*, and *sound* used in meaningful context.
- Read books that contain rhyme, repetition, and verses.
- Print a child's dictated story or message on occasion if she requests
- Use story charts and brainstorming charts which are based on the child's directions
- Play dominoes, bingo, and matching games which encourage matching words, letters and objects
- Provide tactile experiences such as tracing letters in salt, sand and finger paint

Print Rich Environment

- Label shelves and cabinets with pictures and words so children can assume the responsibility for keeping their learning environment orderly
- Label areas of the room such as block center and art center
- Write reminders on signs such as: Talk quietly in the book and listening center. Wear a paint shirt. Stack the blocks.
- Make a name card for each child. Allow the child to put her "signature" on the side (writing her name on the other side) Use the cards during classroom routines for recording attendance, playing games, or washing hands for lunch
- Maintain a well stocked author's corner with the following items: various types of pencils, crayons, and water color markers; various types of paper; blank books; etc. The authors corner is critical in providing a print rich environment

Developing Skill in Writing

- Provide a print-rich environment
- Provide opportunities for drawing and writing with various tools
- Provide opportunities for tracing and drawing in sand, salt and paint
- Provide clay and play dough for creating objects and letters
- Provide daily opportunities for meaningful writing
- Include props for creating print in dramatic play areas
- Model the importance of writing by letting the children see us make lists, write notes to others, and jot notes on planning sheets

**Our goal as teachers
is to help children feel
that we accept their efforts.**

Writing is a constructive process that develops over time. If we insist that children hold their pencils in a certain way, form letter perfectly, or spell correctly, we discourage them from writing. **Our unreasonable expectations may lower their self-esteem.**



Helping Children Develop a Sense of Story

- Tell stories often
- Display books on open bookracks so the children can see the covers
- Try to keep the books in good condition
- Provide various types of books
- Add new books gradually
- Read to children in small groups during scheduled story times
- Read books selected by the children when reading to them
- Use a "directed listening/thinking activity" when reading a book or telling a story
- Encourage children to retell a story after it has been read

Stimulating an Enjoyment for Books and Storytelling

- Encourage children to bring books from home to share with friends
- Extend the main idea of the book by providing related experiences
- Use puppets and flannel board figures to stimulate the children to tell and retell favorite stories

Making Math Fun

- Practice one-to-one correspondence with snacks by counting crackers, fruit snacks, or carrot sticks, et.
- Counting a pile of red blocks, then a pile of blue blocks, then count them all together. Or taking six cookies and 'dividing' among 3 friends
- When putting toy cars in a row, encourage a pattern such as blue, blue, red, yellow, blue, blue, red, yellow. Make a game of sorting toys and household items by attributes such as size, color, & shape

Intellectual Development

Develops Reading Skills

The child:

- classifies objects by size, shape, function, or color
- arranges objects in sequential order according to color, size, shape or texture
- matches alphabet letters that look alike
- reads experience charts, songs, poems, and stories with a group
- is able to follow the conventional direction of print in a story from left to right
- arranges a progressive series of pictures in sequence to tell a story
- makes up original stories to tell from pictures
- makes predictions about stories from the title, pictures, and information from portions heard
- recalls major events after picture-reading a story
- makes up stories which include a beginning, middle, and end
- displays an interest in listening to books and stories
- selects favorite books and looks at them during center time
- pretends to read favorite stories and books

Develops Math Concepts

The child:

- uses concrete objects to measure length, height, and width
- identifies the longest, shortest, tallest, and widest objects
- compares weight of objects
- observes that clocks and calendars are used to measure the passage of time
- observes that a ruler is used for measuring length, a thermometer for measuring temperature, and scales for measuring weight
- discriminates between differences in geometric shapes
- recognizes that coins and bills represent a value for exchange
- groups objects according to size, shape, color, or function using only one attribute at a time
- describes a group of objects
- uses one-to-one matching to compare two groups of objects
- compares two groups of objects and identifies more/less, same amount; more/fewer, same number
- counts the objects in a group and says a corresponding number as he touches each one
- recognizes some numerals and matches them with a corresponding number of objects



Intellectual Development (continued)

Developing Listening Skills

The child:

- identifies environmental sounds
- identifies differences in volume and tempo
- follows one-step directions to perform an age appropriate task
- attends to the person speaking
- listens to stories, poetry, and songs with enthusiasm
- retells a story using correct sequence of events
- predicts the possible outcome after listening to a portion of a story
- answers questions about a selection after hearing it read

Develops Speaking Skills

The child:

- expresses ideas and feelings about personal experiences
- participates in informal group discussions
- participates in language games, dramatic play, and musical activities
- observes and discusses concrete stimuli
- dictates experiences to an adult or older peer; watches as spoken words are written down; reads messages aloud either alone, with scribe, or listens as they scribe reads the words
- enjoys language—says rhymes and makes up stories and poems

Develops Writing Skills

The child:

- participates in activities to develop small muscle control (manipulative toys, clay, sand, blocks, puzzles, art activities)
- handles paintbrushes, scissors, crayons, and pencil with ease
- prints own name either conventionally or unconventionally
- has an awareness that writing conveys a message and that she can read the message she has written
- is confident in writing a message, regardless of the level of conventionality
- may be using random alphabet letters to invent spelling

Develops Sensory, Perceptual, and Conceptual Skills

The child:

- classifies objects according to color, shape, size, texture, taste, smell, and sound
- arranges objects in sequential order by color, size, texture, and weight
- experiences and describes relational concepts: same/different; none/some/all; part/whole; under/over; in/out; behind/in front of; inside/outside; up/down; before/after; first/next/last; beginning/end; near/far; close to/away from

Develops Science Concepts

The child:

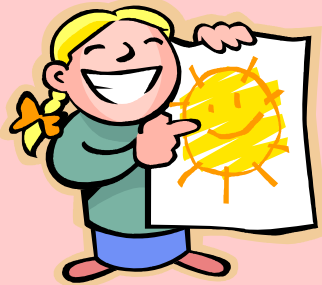
- recognizes an existing problem and asks questions
- investigates and labels the attributes of things
- describes how things are the same and how they are different
- organizes information and predicts possible solutions
- makes judgments based upon evaluation of possible solutions
- explores ideas about people, animals, plant life, weather changes, seasons, water and air
- experiments with weight and measurement
- estimates amount, weight, height, length and distance



Social and Emotional Development


Develops Healthy Concepts About Self	Develops the Ability to Relate to Others	Develops Understandings About His Environment
<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> feels free to express emotions <input type="checkbox"/> attempts to take care of personal needs <input type="checkbox"/> attempts to solve problems <input type="checkbox"/> adjusts to minor changes in schedule 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> chooses to work with others <input type="checkbox"/> is learning to take turns <input type="checkbox"/> is learning to resolve minor conflicts with adult help <input type="checkbox"/> asks others for help when it is needed 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> makes a simple plan and completes what has been planned <input type="checkbox"/> chooses an activity and stays with it to completion <input type="checkbox"/> works independently in small groups and in large groups <input type="checkbox"/> shows respect for others and their property <input type="checkbox"/> becomes aware of the surrounding community

Creative Development

Develops Music Concepts	Develops Art Concepts	Develops Dramatic Play Concepts
<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> enjoys listening to singing <input type="checkbox"/> sings spontaneously while playing <input type="checkbox"/> distinguishes between loud and soft, fast and slow, happy and sad, as related to music <input type="checkbox"/> requests favorite songs <input type="checkbox"/> sings "with" a group (may be a measure behind an sing different words) <input type="checkbox"/> moves rhythmically in her own way <input type="checkbox"/> manipulates and experiments with using instruments to respond to the tempo of a recording <input type="checkbox"/> invents words for a song or makes up extra verses for familiar song 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> uses all the senses for active exploration <input type="checkbox"/> manipulates, transforms, and combines a variety of different materials <input type="checkbox"/> choose materials and activities <input type="checkbox"/> makes models out of clay and dough <input type="checkbox"/> draws and paints using a variety of different types of media <input type="checkbox"/> enjoys the beauty of the natural world <input type="checkbox"/> notices and describes his environment <input type="checkbox"/> draws representations from personal experiences <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">  </div>	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> role plays events from daily experiences <input type="checkbox"/> models adult roles <input type="checkbox"/> plays out feelings and emotions <input type="checkbox"/> uses materials to create representations of her world <input type="checkbox"/> role plays with puppets and models of people and animals <input type="checkbox"/> plans and works with others to follow through on her plan



Spiritual Development

<p style="text-align: center;">Develops Concepts About God</p> <p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> understands God made people <input type="checkbox"/> develops an awareness that God loves and cares for him <input type="checkbox"/> understands God made earth, sky, plants, and animals <input type="checkbox"/> knows God wants people to love him <input type="checkbox"/> develops an awareness that God wants him to love others <input type="checkbox"/> prays thank-you prayers and talks to God <input type="checkbox"/> develops some awareness that God can do things people cannot do 	<p style="text-align: center;">Forms Concepts About Self</p> <p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> feels he is important to God, self and others <input type="checkbox"/> understands he is growing as God planned for him to do <input type="checkbox"/> knows God wants him to take care of his body <input type="checkbox"/> develops an awareness that he can think, work, and play because God gave him abilities <input type="checkbox"/> is learning to make some choices
<p style="text-align: center;">Develops Concepts About Jesus</p> <p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> can understand that Jesus was born <input type="checkbox"/> may know that Jesus grew from a baby to a man <input type="checkbox"/> can understand that Jesus had a family <input type="checkbox"/> knows Jesus helped people because He loved them <input type="checkbox"/> develops an awareness that Jesus loves her <input type="checkbox"/> develops an awareness that Jesus loves others <input type="checkbox"/> develops some understanding that Jesus wants people to love him <input type="checkbox"/> begins to understand that Jesus is God's Son <input type="checkbox"/> has some awareness that Jesus can do many things people cannot do 	<p style="text-align: center;">Develops Concepts About Others</p> <p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> understands that certain people love and help her <input type="checkbox"/> understands God wants people to love and help one another <input type="checkbox"/> knows people are alike in some ways and different in others <input type="checkbox"/> develops an awareness that each person has rights <input type="checkbox"/> is developing an awareness that some things belong to her and some things belong to others <input type="checkbox"/> knows people have different kinds of work to do <input type="checkbox"/> understands God wants people to be friendly and have friends <div style="text-align: right; margin-top: 20px;">  </div>
<p style="text-align: center;">Develops Concepts About the Bible</p> <p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> knows the Bible is an important Book <input type="checkbox"/> understands the Bible is a Book about God and Jesus <input type="checkbox"/> develops an awareness that the Bible helps people know how God wants them to live <input type="checkbox"/> knows the Bible has stories and verses about God, Jesus, and people <input type="checkbox"/> knows the Bible has stories about families who helped one another 	<p style="text-align: center;">Develops Concepts About Families</p> <p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> understands God wants people to live, work, and play together in families <input type="checkbox"/> understands God wants his family members to love him <input type="checkbox"/> develops an awareness of ways family members help one another <input type="checkbox"/> understands there are ways he can help his family <input type="checkbox"/> know each family member has tasks to do <input type="checkbox"/> knows the Bible has stories about families who helped one another



Spiritual Development (continued)

Develops Concepts About Church

The child:

- understands people at church love and care for her
- has friends at church
- understands people at church help people who need help
- develops an awareness that people use the Bible at church
- sings songs, listens to Bible stories, and talks about God and Jesus at church
- understands people at church have different tasks to do
- knows people give money at church
- understands going to church is important

Develops Concepts About The Natural World

The child:

- understands God made earth and sky; day and night; sun, moon, and stars; rain, snow, and wind; people; plants; animals; seasons; and things in the natural world
- knows God planned for people, plants and animals to grow
- understands God wants people to care for the things He made



Physical Development

Develops Large Muscles

The child:

- explores ways to move from one place to another
- moves in various speeds, levels, directions, and rhythms
- combines movement with equipment

Develops Small Muscles

The child:

- explores ways to move arms and hands
- explores ways to move arms and hands in combination with a variety of types of equipment

Develops Movement and Balance

The child:

- maintains balance while moving
- uses the body as a base of support

Develops Wholesome Attitudes Toward the Body

The child:

- names body parts
- develops habits which relate to proper care of the body
- becomes aware that the body is growing and changing

Recognizes Safety Hazards

The child:

- helps establish and practices indoor and outdoor safety procedures
- practices safety procedures in case of fire, earthquake, and severe storms



First Nine Weeks Skills

From a Kindergarten Teacher
Oak Mountain Elementary School

This information was obtained
by a former ELC child.

The skills below are the
Kindergarten Teachers goals
for the child to learn in the
first 9 weeks* of kindergarten

*meaning the children DO NOT
have to master them BEFORE
kindergarten

Language Arts

Write first name correctly (first
letter of name is capital and all
others are lowercase)

Recognize letter, identify sound
and write letter for the following
letters:

Ll, Oo, Gg, Tt, Pp, Aa, Nn, Mm

Recognizes first name in print

Math

Count by rote to 25

Count up to 5 objects

Arrange the numerals 1-5 in
sequence

Match sets to numerals 1-5

Identify numerals 1-5

Identify shapes: square, circle,
rectangle, triangle

Sort and classify objects

Create, identify and extend
simple patterns
(ABABAB, ABBABBA, ABCABC)

General Knowledge

Know all colors: red, orange,
yellow, green, blue, purple, pink,
white, brown, black

Cut on a line

Color neatly

Trace

Glue properly



Local Kindergarten Teacher Testimony

Christa Urban, Mt. Laurel Elementary School

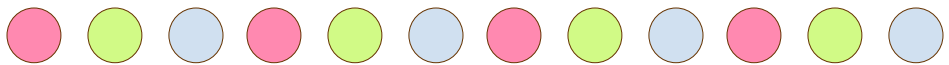
The advantages of sending your child to preschool at an early age are:

*He will have an appropriate and structured learning program

*He will learn how to interact with children his age and it will help him move directly into a linked school when he is old enough.

Max Shaw is a Kindergarten student at Mt. Laurel Elementary School. (Max attended preschool at The Church at Brook Hills Early Learning Center) I know Max was well prepared for kindergarten. He can write his letters and sounds and can write and read words. Max also has very good behavior and great social skills.

I know and believe that he was developmentally ready for a kindergarten class setting because of his involvement in his preschool class.



What your child needs to know and doesn't need to know before he goes to kindergarten

The time has come: your little angel is ready to leave you for the big wide world of kindergarten. What should your child know before he goes? Some schools will want your child to know specific things. Be sure to contact your child's future school ahead of time and ask them what their requirements are for kindergarten. Most schools will not have pre-requisites because, after all, that is what kindergarten is for, learning the basics.

The ability to say his alphabet or sing the alphabet song is encouraged as is he ability to count even on his fingers. Don't put too much pressure on your child as it will make him nervous about going to kindergarten.

Your child should know how to tend to his own toilet needs. Usually kindergarten teachers will not want to be running into the bathroom to help your child, though they are usually very understanding about helping with zippers and buttons and such. Your child needs to know that he has to ask when he needs the bathroom. Some small children will have accidents just because they are uncomfortable asking the teacher to use the bathroom.

Taking turns is a big kindergarten activity. Make sure your child knows how to take turns, be fair in games and walk away from other children who may not have these skills. The last thing you want to happen is for your child to start kindergarten off on the wrong foot by becoming the class bully.

Listening to the teacher is one of the most important things your child needs to be prepared for. Usually this is not a big issue as most children will listen to other people much better than they listen to you and kindergarten teachers are experts at commanding attention. Teach you child to respect the teacher and follow instructions and don't be afraid to mention the principle's office if you think it will help.

Don't forget the fun. Kindergarten is the beginning of learning, but it is also a lot of fun. If your child knows to expect play and fun, he will be more likely to want to go to school and you will have less problems with separation. If possible, meet some of the children your child will be in class with and get them together beforehand, it will make the first day a lot less scarier for him and you.

"What your child needs to know and doesn't need to know before he goes to Kindergarten"

Published by: Page Wise-We've got answers <http://ia.essortment.com/childreadykindrtas.htm>



The Importance Of Reading To A Preschooler

Favorite Books For Preschoolers

“Reading to kids is very important at this age,” notes Delia Dyer, Language Arts Specialist at Athens-Childersburg Elementary School in Lexington, Kentucky. Dyer advises to look for books that are about your child’s interests (animals, princess, super heroes, etc.) “Even if the books are too hard for the child to read on his own, encourage him to read the parts or words he knows and you can read the rest”.

Reading aloud to children will set them on a life-long journey of learning and exploration. Beginning reading is the solid foundation on which almost all subsequent learning takes place”. (Smith, S.B., Simmons, D.C. & Kameenui, E.J. (Feb. 1995)

- **Corduroy—by Don Freeman**
A lost button leads to lovable adventures for a bear who longs for a home.
- **Fidgety Fish—Ruth Galloway**
Explore the ocean with an enthusiastic fish in this pitch-perfect read aloud
- **Franklin Says I Love You—Paulette Bourgeois**
A turtle searches for the perfect birthday present for his mother
- **Harold’s ABC—Crockett Johnson**
Purple-Crayon weilder Harold draws his way through the alphabet
- **Is Your Mama A Llama—Deborah Guarino**
Your child will meet animal friends in this rhyming guessing-game
- **The Mitten—Jan Brett**
When a child loses his mitten in the snow, it becomes a cozy home for woodland creatures
- **The Snowy Day—Ezra Jack Keats**
Delight in the possibilities of the year’s first snowfall in the city
- **The Very Hungry Caterpillar—Eric Carle**
A tiny caterpillar “eats” his way through the book to become a butterfly
- **Good Night, Gorilla—Peggy Rathmann**
Bid good night to the animals, but make sure they go to sleep
- **The Sun Is My Favorite Star—Frank Asch**
Inspire your little one’s sense of wonder with an exploration of the sun throughout a day
- **If You Give A Mouse A Cookie—Laura Joffe Numeroff**
A young boy finds out what happens when he gives a mouse a cookie
- **If You Give A Pig A Pancake—Laura Joffe Numeroff**
Follow the trail of mischief with this pig
- **The Hat—Jan Brett**
A Hat blown in the wind finds many adventures
- **Guess How Much I Love You— Sam McBratney**
A touching bedtime story seeks to measure the immeasurable: the love between a parent and a child



All You Ever Need to Learn About Preparing Your Child For Kindergarten

What memories do parents have of their first day at school? The smells of peanut butter and school glue. The sounds of young voices, shrill bells and school bus engines. The sights of crying children and equally tearful parents.

The beginning of 5-year-old kindergarten is full of mixed emotions for everyone. The excitement of new friends, a real backpack and big-kid responsibilities demand of today's 5-year-olds what was once expected of 6-year-olds, or first-graders.

Although many parents eagerly anticipate kindergarten, some question their child's readiness for all-day school. Public kindergarten curricula now include material once reserved for first grade. Parents and educators say more is expected of today's 5-year-olds than in previous generations, and that can heighten anxiety among kids—and parents.

Parents must assess whether their “recently 5” child is ready for all-day school and the academic requirements that come with it. Denise Smith, a Shelby County kindergarten teacher with 25 years of experience, understands parents' apprehension in enrolling a child who may be months or even a full year younger than some of his classmates.

“School today is much more academic than in the past,” Smith says. Smith teaches at Calera Elementary, where naptime is eliminated to allow more teaching time. And instruction typically begins with children expected to know much more than years past. Before enrolling in kindergarten, children are expected to recognize the letters of their name, colors, numbers to 10, be able to sort, classify and recognize likenesses and differences, and recite nursery rhymes. Many will be reading fluently by mid-year.

However, not every 5-year-old is ready for these rigors. Some are too young to sit still. Others cannot yet recognize letters or understand left-right tracking. That's why kindergarten teachers teach on multiple levels. “We get a variety of kids, and we just take them where they are,” Smith says.

Most of those who lag behind are “young” 5-year-olds, with fewer months to prepare. Many are boys, more interested in blocks than letters. After a slow start, some will mature quickly in the structured setting. However, some experience kindergarten as the first in a series of failures.

Alabama law doesn't mandate school attendance until age 7. Some parents wait until their child is 6 to enroll him or her in K5, giving their child another maturing year.

When should a parent wait? Smith suggests seeking advice from pediatricians, church teachers or preschool teachers. She says parents should observe their child in a library or other story-time setting. Is the child able to sit quietly, or does she turn around backwards or annoy others? Does she interact appropriately? By observing and seeking assessments, parents can make informed decisions.

Dr. Regina Thompson, coordinator of Early Childhood Education at Samford University, suggests half-day private or church kindergarten programs as excellent options for young 5-year-olds. If their child matures quickly, he will be ready for first grade. If not, he can enter full-day 5K with enrichment advantages, ready to excel with no “failure” stigma.

“Whatever is decided, they need to be in a structured program,” Thompson says. Thompson said a structured preschool program is good preparation for preschoolers. She says daycare programs or home care often don't encourage independence or deeper thinking. A more regimented half-day schedule introduces children to socialization and independence, whether at age 4 or 5.

Smith says some extra-year benefits extend beyond elementary school. Those who wait become the first among classmates to reach milestones. Conversely, the youngest in the class graduates at 17, facing adult-sized decisions months ahead of peers.

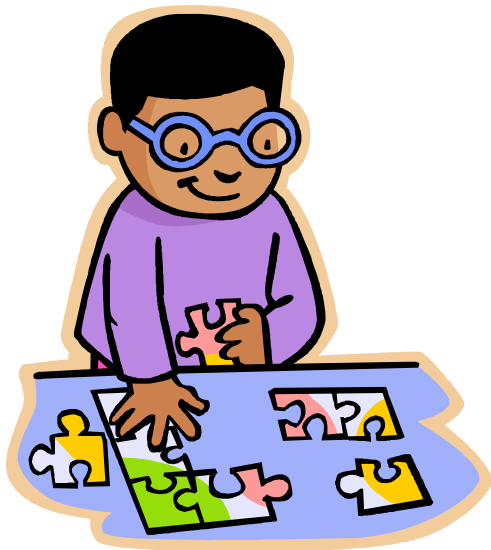
Although rare, Thompson says serious consequences can result from delaying 5K. Children with undiagnosed speech difficulties, behavior problems, learning challenges or other issues may lose a crucial year of diagnosis and treatment if not enrolled in public schools. Parents should consult pediatricians about those concerns.

Thompson equates readiness, in part, to reading preparation. She encourages parents to read as teachers, eliciting responses. “Children need to apply deeper thinking to what they see everyday,” says Thompson. “Stop and ask questions, and after reading, have discussions.”

Parents should ask children to identify signs, Thompson says, and other “environmental print,” such as trademarked fast-food signs and retail store signs. Parents should present varied text, from wordless books to complex storylines.

All agree: Delaying full-day 5K is not a parental failure. “Look at it as another year you have with them,” says Smith. “A lot of little boys and girls who are held back get a stronger foundation. Sometimes, by giving them that extra year, you are going to enable them to do their best.”





Readiness Checklist

Kindergarten readiness checklists can be extensive, from concept development to health concerns. Not all agree on every criterion. However, here's a basic list, compiled from Websites and interviews, profiling a child prepared for 5K:

- *Names colors
- *Holds a crayon and tries to scribble or draw
- *Bounces a ball, runs, jumps and climbs
- *Dresses independently
- *Handles toileting
- *Carries lunch tray and chooses appropriate foods
- *Gets in and out of the car independently
- *Follows through when given one or two directions
- *Is accustomed to routines
- *Recites nursery rhymes
- *Talks about everyday experiences and tells stories
- *Expresses interest in books and words. Sits and listens to a story
- *Asks questions about how things work
- *Uses words to solve problems when frustrated. Is able to express
- *Exhibits social skills, closing mouth with chewing, covering nose and mouth to sneeze, saying "please" and "thank you"
- *Complies with rules, limits and routines
- *Takes turns and shares. Respects rights, property and feelings of others.

In addition, a child entering kindergarten should know his full name, how old he is, his telephone number, address and his mother's and father's names.

If You Want To Know The Truth on Any Subject Just Ask A Preschooler

- A mother was preparing pancakes for her sons, Kevin, 5, and Ryan, 3. The boys began to argue over who would get the first pancake. Their mother saw the opportunity for a moral lesson. "If Jesus were sitting here, He would say, 'Let my brother have the first pancake. I can wait.'" Kevin turned to his younger brother and said, "Ryan, you be Jesus."
- A father was at the beach with his children when his four-year-old son ran up to him, grabbed his hand, and led him to the shore, where a seagull lay dead in the sand. "Daddy, what happened to him?" the son asked. "He died and went to heaven," the dad replied. The boy thought a moment and then said, "Did God throw him back down?"
- A father was reading Bible stories to his young son. He read, "The man named Lot was warned to take his wife and flee out of the city, but his wife looked back and was turned to salt." His son asked, "What happened to the flea?"
- A mother and her young son returned from the grocery store and began putting away the groceries. The boy opened the box of animal crackers and spread them all over the table. "What are you doing?" his mother asked. "The box says not to eat them if the seal is broken' the boy explained. "I'm looking for the seal."
- After the church service a little boy told the pastor, "When I grow up, I'm going to give you some money." "Well, thank you," the pastor replied, "but why?" "Because my daddy says you're one of the poorest preachers we've ever had."
- A three-year-old put his shoes on by himself. His mother noticed that the left shoe was on the right foot. She said, "Son, your shoes are on the wrong feet." He looked up at her with a raised brow and said, "Don't kid me, Mom. They're the only feet I got!"
- A wife invited some people to dinner. At the table, she turned to their six year old daughter and said, "Would you like to say the blessing?" "I wouldn't know what to say," the girl replied. "Just say what you hear Mommy say," the wife answered. The daughter bowed her head and said, "Lord, why on earth did I invite all these people to dinner?"
- On the first day of school, about mid-morning, the kindergarten teacher said, "If anyone has to go to the bathroom, hold up two fingers." A little voice from the back of the room asked, "How will that help?"



More Information About Kindergarten Readiness on the Web

Eager to Learn: Educating Our Preschoolers

<http://www.nap.edu/books/0309068363/html/>

Helping Your Preschool Child

<http://www.ed.gov/parents/earlychild/ready/preschool/part.html>

How Can I Help My Child Get Ready For Kindergarten?

<http://www.howkidsdevelop.com/developKindergarten.html>

My Child's Academic Success. Helping Your Preschool Child

<http://www.ed.gov/parents/earlychild/ready/preschool/part.html>

Is My Child Ready...?

<http://childparenting.about.com/cs/k6education/a/schoolreadiness.htm>

Is My Child Ready for Kindergarten?

<http://www.education.umn.edu/CEED/publications/questionsaboutkids/kindergarten.htm>

Readiness for Kindergarten: Parent and Teacher Beliefs

<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=93257>

Ready or not...Preparing young children for the classroom

<http://readyweb.crc.uiuc.edu/library/1997/readynot.html>

ReadyWeb

<http://readyweb.crc.uiuc.edu/>

School Readiness and Children's Developmental Status

<http://ceep.crc.uiuc.edu/eecearchive/digests/1995/zill95.html>

Transition to Kindergarten

<http://www.fmhi.usf.edu/institute/pubs/pdf/cfs/fcpi/transition.htm>

What About Kindergarten? Helping Your Preschool Child

http://www.ed.gov/parents/earlychild/ready/preschool/part_pg9.html#p9

What Should Be Learned in Kindergarten?

<http://www.kidsource.com/kidsource/content/learned.kindergarten.html>

What to Expect of a Kindergartener

<http://www.fmhi.usf.edu/institute/pubs/pdf/cfs/fcpi/transition/10expect.pdf>

Some Other Ideas:

Use Your Search Engine: "Kindergarten", "Kindergarten Readiness", "Kindergarten Prep"





Date: September

Classroom: Fours

Teachers: Grace & Joan

Theme: Learning About Me

Purpose: Understanding their feelings & feelings of others

Biblical Perspective

Bible Stories	Bible Thoughts/Verses
Jesus & The Children	Let the children come to me (Matthew 19:13-15)
	I am wonderfully made. (Psalm 139)

Concepts

Concepts	Activities to relay this concept
I feel many different emotions	Discuss & explore different emotions
God loves me as I am	Self Portrait (display in classroom)
Other children feel same emotions	Paper Plate Faces with different emotions

Skills

Skills	Focus
Fine Motor	Cutting, Gluing, Finger Painting
Gross Motor	Outdoor Play
Social	Making Friends
Thinking	Learning Names, Classroom Rules
Reading (Letter of the week)	Names Recognition
Math (Number of the week)	Calendar



Monday: September

Bible Story: Jesus & the children

Bible Truth: I am wonderfully made. Psalm 139

Concepts: I feel many different emotions

Learning Experiences In Centers

Center	Activity / Focus	Items Needed
Art	Paper (doll) People	Pattern, construction paper, yarn
Authors Corner	Writing Names	Exploring with pencils, markers
Blocks & Transportation	Building Homes	Blocks, Lincoln logs
Books/Language	All About Me & emotions	Books on emotions
Home Living/Creative Drama	Dress Up	Dress up Clothes
Science & Math	Friendship Cookies	Cookies, frosting, plastic knives
Puzzles & Manipulatives	Floor puzzles	Human body

Learning Experiences During Group Time

Children sit on animal carpet for group time.

Calendar Time: Teacher assists children in singing songs to get them familiar with:
Days of the week & Months of the Year

Weather: Teacher assists the children in singing songs to familiarize them with different types of weather. The class keeps a weather chart and updates it during group time.

Pledge: The Class also learns the pledge of allegiance and participates in it daily.

Jobs: Some Classrooms have helper jobs each week. Such as "door holder".
During Group Time the teachers explain each child's job for the week.

Bible Story & Bible thought Time: Teacher introduces the weeks Bible Story & Concepts by reading the story from the Bible and marking the bible thoughts in the Bible with a book mark.

Songs: "Hello, how are you?" , "The more we get together", "Jesus loves the little children"

Read: Today I feel silly, I like Me

Make a class book: "(child's name) is happy when..." illustrate page & display in classroom





typical daily schedule for **Four Year Olds**

This is a very flexible schedule that changes according to the needs of the children.

(Days & Times may vary with the new school year schedule)

9:00-9:15	Meet & Greet Children
9:15-9:30	Morning Work
9:30-10:30	Centers & Art
10:30-11:00	Potty Break
11:00-11:30	Group Time (Monday & Friday)
11:00-11:20	Music (Tuesday & Thursday) Spanish (Monday & Wednesday)
11:30-12:00	Playground
12:00-12:15	Potty Break Wash Hands
12:15-12:45	Lunch
12:45-1:00	Clean Up, Get out Mats
1:00-2:00	Nap Time
2:00-2:15	Put Up Mats, Get Ready to go home
2:15-2:30	Review the Day

*Teachers will care for potty needs outside of this schedule as well.

