



K i n d e r g a r t e n “ R e a d i n e s s ”

Is my Child Ready for Kindergarten?

J a n u a r y 2 0 1 6

Often families ask for guidance in determining the readiness of their children for Kindergarten. We know as early childhood professionals that children develop in different ways and at different rates. One child may develop language skills faster than they develop social skills. NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children) states that, “Readiness is more than basic knowledge of language and math, important as these are. Readiness expectations should include all areas: physical, cognitive, social and emotional competence as well as a positive attitude toward learning.” Here at Towsley, we work hard to provide children with the experiences and guidance to develop the skills needed to be prepared for the range of Kindergarten classrooms they will encounter when they leave us.

“I’m Going Tomorrow!?!”

The concept of time can be difficult for young children to understand because it is so abstract. Many Kindergarten roundups and open houses begin in February but children do not start Kindergarten until September. Children may think after visiting their “future” Kindergarten classroom that they will begin Kindergarten the next day and that they are done with preschool.

Children process the idea of going to Kindergarten in different ways. For some children, big changes can cause anxiety. We **strongly** recommend that you wait to talk in-depth with your child about the transition to Kindergarten until a few weeks before they attend. When children bring up the subject, one response may be, “You sound nervous/excited about Kindergarten. It is not happening for a long time. Right now you will still go to Towsley. I will let you know when it is time to get ready for Kindergarten.” We want to respect the child’s feelings but provide reassurance that things aren’t immediately changing.

Please remember that children often overhear conversations between adults (parent/parent or teacher/parent). They may pick up on your feelings and anxieties. It is best to save conversations about the topic when children are not present. We will provide more information about preparing for the Kindergarten transition during the summer

Readiness Indicators (Ann Arbor Public Schools)

Language

- Can speak in simple sentences
- Can use a normal speaking voice
- Knows how to whisper, speak softly, speak loudly and shout
- Can express needs, feelings, and opinions
- Can answer questions and give information about self
- Knows their own phone number and parents/guardians names
- Can relate experiences
- Can ask questions and ask for help

Manners and Social Skills

- Does not interrupt conversations, stories, and lessons
- Is aware that other children deserve attention too
- Is learning the concepts of fairness
- Is learning that rules and procedures are important for the safety and well being of all
- Is learning that rules and expected behaviors might vary from place to place
- Is learning to take turns, raise hand, and share
- Says positive phrases such as: "please, thank you, I'm sorry, excuse me," etc.
- Takes care of personal belongings, materials/equipment
- Knows it is OK to make mistakes
- Knows it is NOT OK to be mean or disruptive

Fine Motor Skills

- Has engaged in many experiences using crayons, paints, clay, books, puzzles, beads, blocks, zippers, laces, water, sand, markers, Legos, scissors, pencils, etc.

Health and Safety Habits

- Covers mouth when coughing or sneezing
- Can blow nose and disposes of tissues appropriately
- Uses the bathroom independently and washes his/her hands
- Dresses self independently
- Attempts to put on own coat, boots, mittens, etc.
- Washes hands before eating and when they get dirty
- Can wash face
- Does not put objects in mouth
- Knows sharp objects are dangerous and leaves them alone

Listening

- Listens attentively to a story for 5 minutes or more
- Can recall some details of a story or video
- Can follow directions, especially those involving spatial concepts (under, behind, over, next to, etc.)
- Can recognize common sounds (household, animals, street, classrooms, etc.)

Academics

- Recognizes first name in print
- Recites some rhymes and poems
- Sings simple songs
- Can tell about pictures
- Enjoys books and stories
- Knows most of the alphabet
- Counts to ten
- Notices shapes and forms

Michigan Transitions to New Cut-off Date for Kindergarten

To enter Kindergarten in Michigan, children must turn 5 years-old by:

September 1 for 2016-17.

Kindergarten

Universal all-day kindergarten for AAPS students

The All Day Kindergarten program consists of daily literacy, mathematics, science and social studies instruction delivered in developmentally appropriate and exciting ways. Students can expect to engage in daily whole group, small group and individual activities as well as center-based explorations. AAPS Kindergarten students will have many opportunities to engage socially with peers. Rest assured that the highly qualified, nurturing teachers will love, teach and believe in your child and his/her success.

In addition to the academic benefits, All Day Kindergarten programs positively impact students' self-confidence and the development of social/emotional skills such as playing fairly with others, sharing, and managing one's emotions. The all day program helps to integrate children into the school culture early on. An added perk is seen in the attendance rates, which are significantly higher than those of half-day programs.

To enroll in kindergarten for the 2016-17 school year, a child must turn 5 no later than September 1st. Parents may apply for admission of children who turn 5 by December 1st .

Young 5's

Free program for students residing within the AAPS attendance boundaries

The Ann Arbor Board of Education has approved a Young Fives Program that offers an alternative for children whose parents feel that they are not yet ready for a traditional kindergarten experience. Under the Young Fives Program, families that live within the Ann Arbor Public School district may apply to one of the identified schools offering Young Fives. Students who participate in the Young Fives program will then return to their home school to enroll in kindergarten in preparation for success in first grade.

Expanded locations! Now available at Abbot, Bryant, Dicken, Haisley, Lawton, and Logan.

Eligibility for Young Fives is determined by birthdate - for 2016-17 child must turn five between May 1 and September 1, 2016. Parents may apply for admission of children who turn 5 by December 1, 2016.

Alongside a play-based curriculum, UM Towsley Children's House incorporates The Project Approach to guide learning and development. The Project Approach refers to a set of teaching strategies that enable teachers to guide children through in-depth studies of real-world topics. Projects have a complex but flexible framework where teaching and learning are seen as an interactive process. When teachers implement the Approach successfully, children can feel highly motivated and actively involved in their own learning and produce work of high quality.

The teams of professional teachers create lesson plans in a manner that is ever evolving and adapting to meet the needs and interests of the children. Attention is given to social, cognitive and physical development. Children take part in a variety of activities throughout the day that prepares them socially and academically for their next phase of early education. Below are snapshots of children and teachers interacting throughout the day and some of the readiness indicators/skills the children are gaining through the activity.



The children in the classroom began talking about traveling on airplanes after vacation. They began exploring the topic of airplanes which led to an investigative project. Throughout the study, they used a variety of ways to find information about airplanes and airports. They read books, explored hands on activities, did field site visits and had experts talk with the children.

Readiness Indicators:

Language

- Can speak in simple sentences
- Can use a normal speaking voice
- Can express needs, feelings, and opinions
- Can ask questions

Manners and Social Skills

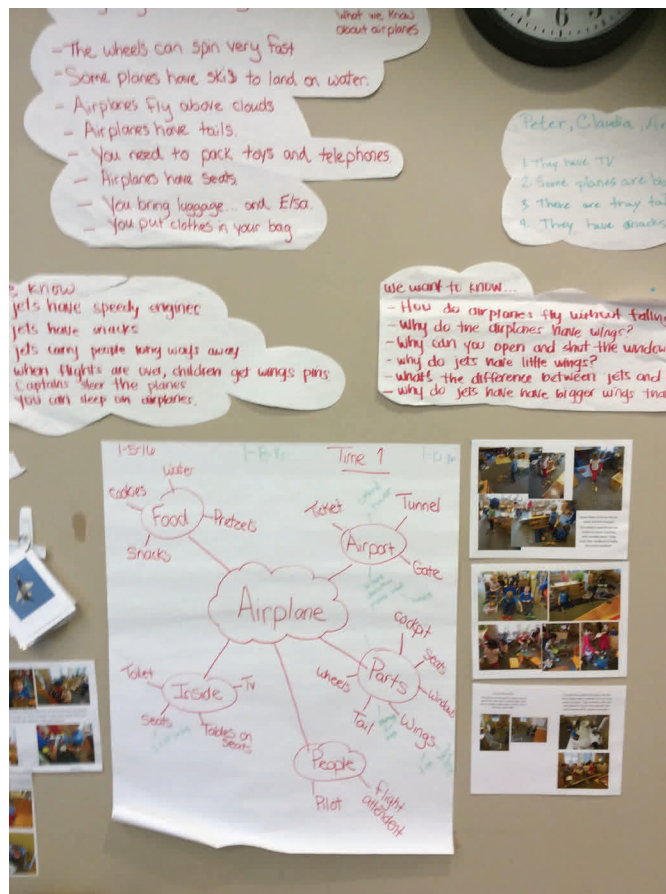
- Does not interrupt conversations, stories, and lessons
- Is aware that other children deserve attention too
- Is learning to take turns, raise hand, and share
- Knows it is OK to make mistakes
- Knows its not okay to be disruptive

Listening

- Listens attentively to "a story" for 5 minutes or more

Academic

- Can tell about pictures





One part of the children's early morning routine is "signing in". Children might sign in by finding their name, writing their name on a variety of materials, circling their name etc.

Readiness Indicator:

Fine Motor Skills

Has engaged in many experiences using crayons, paints, clay, books, puzzles, beads, blocks, zippers, laces, water, sand, markers, Legos, scissors, pencils, etc.

Academics

Recognizing first name in print

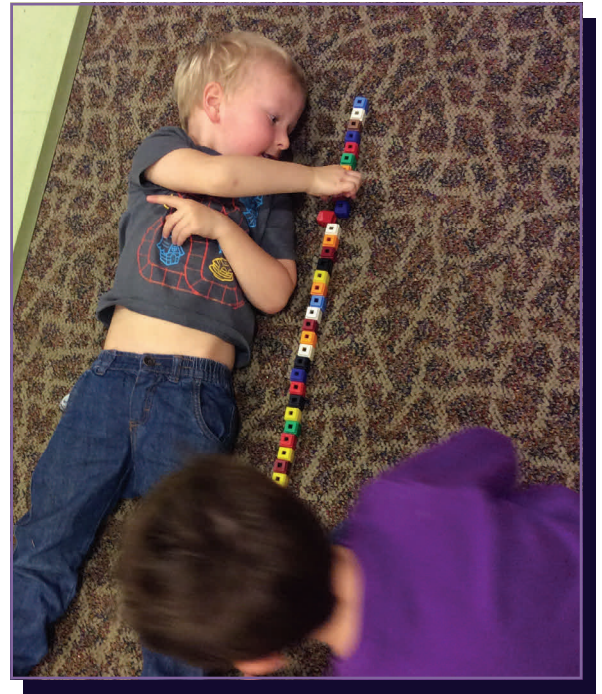
In the classroom, the children have access to a variety of manipulatives. The children in the photo used unifix cubes to measure the height of a child. Unifix cubes are an open ended material that also allow children to count, sort, add, subtract, and recognize colors.

Readiness Indicator:

Academics

Counts to ten

Notices shapes and forms



Children have many opportunities during the day to listen to and interact with books independently and with an adult.

Readiness Indicator:

Language

Can speak in simple sentences

Can use a normal speaking voice

Can relate experiences

Can ask questions

Manners and Social Skills

Does not interrupt conversations, stories, and lessons

Listening

Listens attentively to a story for 5 minutes or more

Can recall some details of a story

Academics

Enjoys books and stories



Twice a day children go outdoors for fresh air, unstructured play, and physical activity. In preparation for outdoor time, the children must get dressed. During the winter, this involves taking off their shoes and putting on snow pants, boots, coats, hat, gloves and mittens. Teachers spend time teaching children how to independently get dressed and what order to put on items.

Readiness Indicator:

Health and Safety Habits

Dresses self independently

Attempts to put on own coat, boots, mittens etc.

Listening

Can follow directions, especially those involving spatial concepts



Throughout the year, classrooms take a variety of fieldtrips and/or site visits.

Readiness Indicator:

Language

Can speak in simple sentences

Can relate experiences

Manners and Social Skills

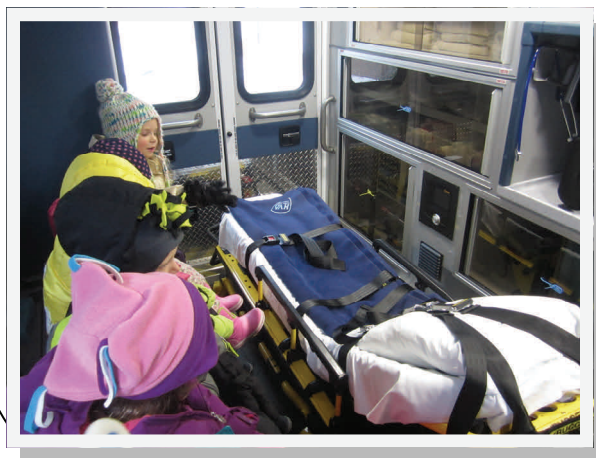
Does not interrupt conversations, stories and lessons

Is learning that rules and procedures are important for the safety and well-being of all

Is learning that rules and expected behaviors might vary from place to place

Listening

Listens attentively to a story for 5 minutes or more





An Exceptional Education Begins with Ann Arbor Public Schools.

Our upcoming kindergarten and Young Five open houses, let children see for themselves the fun that awaits them in September. You will meet the staff, learn about the programs, and enroll your children.

Feel free to attend any of the open houses listed at right. If you're unable to attend your school's open house, simply call to schedule a visit.

Exceptional!
ANN ARBOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS
www.a2schools.org

 *Lead. Care. Inspire.*

 @A2schools  Search for Ann Arbor Public Schools

Kindergarten & Young Fives* Round-Ups

Abbot Elementary*	Tues.	2/23/2016	6:30 - 7:30 pm
Allen Elementary	Thurs.	2/11/2016	6:00 - 7:30 pm
Angell Elementary	Tues.	2/23/2016	6:00 - 7:30 pm
Ann Arbor Open	Tues.	2/23/2016	6:30 - 7:30 pm
A2 STEAM at Northside	Tues.	2/23/2016	6:00 - 7:00 pm
Bach Elementary	Tues.	2/23/2016	6:00 - 7:30 pm
Bryant/Pattengill*	Thurs.	2/25/2016	6:00 - 7:30 pm
Burns Park Elementary	Tues.	2/23/2016	6:00 - 7:15 pm
Carpenter Elementary	Thurs.	2/25/2016	6:00 - 8:00 pm
Dicken Elementary	Tues.	2/9/2016	6:00 - 7:30 pm
Eberwhite Elementary	Thurs.	2/11/2016	6:15 - 7:30 pm
Haisley Elementary*	Thurs.	2/25/2016	6:30 - 7:30 pm
King Elementary	Tues.	2/2/2016	6:00 - 7:30 pm
Lakewood Elementary	Tues.	2/23/2016	6:30 - 7:30 pm
Lawton Elementary*	Thurs.	2/4/2016	6:30 - 7:30 pm
Logan Elementary*	Tues.	2/23/2016	6:00 - 7:30 pm
Mitchell Elementary	Tues.	2/23/2016	6:00 - 7:30 pm
Pittsfield Elementary	Thurs.	2/11/2016	6:00 pm
Thurston Elementary	Thurs.	2/11/2016	6:00 - 7:00 pm
Wines Elementary	Wed.	2/24/2016	6:00 - 7:00 pm

*Young Fives programs offered only at these schools. Children must turn years old between May 1 and December 1, 2016.

Chelsea School District

Getting Parents Ready for Kindergarten

When Tue, February 23, 6:30pm – 7:30pm

Location: North Creek Elementary—Cafeteria

Dexter Community Schools

Young five and Kindergarten Information Night

When: Tue, February 9, 6:30pm – 7:30pm

Where: Cornerstone Elementary School & Bates Elementary, Dexter, MI

Description: This year's Young Fives and Kindergarten information night will be held on **Tuesday, February 9th at 6:30pm**. Both Bates Elementary and Cornerstone Elementary will be open for touring from 6:00 – 6:30pm. The meeting will be held in the Cornerstone Cafeteria and is only for adults. Please call (734) 424-4120 ext. 2011 with questions.

Saline Area Schools

Kindergarten Round Up

When: Thursday, March 3, 2016 6:00pm-7:30pm

Location: Heritage School

Ypsilanti Community Schools

TBA— visit <http://www.ycschools.us/our-schools/preschool-and-kindergarten/>

Additional Resources



Ann Arbor Public School Kindergarten Parent Information

<http://www.aaps.k12.mi.us/academics/files/alldaykindergarten.1.30.pdf>

Kindergarten Enrollment –State of Michigan

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/kindergarten_122554_7.pdf

Top 10 Signs of a Good Kindergarten Classroom—NAEYC

<http://oldweb.naeyc.org/ece/1996/12.pdf>

Is my Child Ready for Kindergarten?—NAEYC

<http://families.naeyc.org/learning-and-development/child-development/my-child-ready-kindergarten>

School Websites

Ann Arbor Public

<http://www.aaps.k12.mi.us/aaps/home>

Chelsea School District

<http://www.chelsea.k12.mi.us/>

Dexter Community Schools

<http://dexterschools.org/>

Saline Area Schools

http://www.salineschools.org/pages/Saline_Area_Schools

Ypsilanti Community Schools

<http://www.ycschools.us/>