



Kansas Early Learning: Birth through age 8

KSDE has identified six Core Principles of Early Learning settings:

1. Enhance development and learning.
2. Implement evidence-based curriculum that includes play.
3. Assess children's development and learning.
4. Promote reciprocal relationships with families.
5. Create a caring community of learners.
6. Plan and implement successful transitions.

Effective Practices

1. Education professionals promote developmentally appropriate programs for young children.
2. Age-appropriate assessment strategies and techniques are used responsibly.
3. All children are welcomed into a heterogeneous kindergarten setting. Retention isn't considered a viable option for any child.

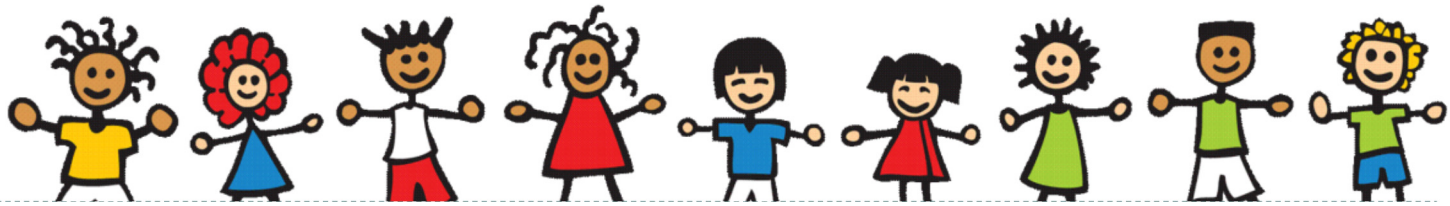
www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/NAEYC_ECE_Bto8_Handout_2013.pdf



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Kansas State Department of Education
Landon State Office Building
900 S.W. Jackson Street, Suite 620
Topeka, KS 66612-1212
(785) 296-7454
www.ksde.org



Kansas Statue 72-1107(c) states that children who are age 5 by Sept. 1 are eligible to attend kindergarten.



Kindergarten Readiness

Early childhood experiences set the tone for long-term school success. Four components function as the supports that influence readiness for children: community, educational environment, family and the child.

A kindergarten readiness snapshot tool can help educators make data-informed decisions in the classroom, home and community.

The data should not be used to keep a 5-year-old out of kindergarten and is not an automatic referral for special education or a progress monitor.

Snapshot vs. Test

Snapshot	Test
Developmental Milestones	Assesses skills acquired
Overview	Comprehensive
Brief to administer	Administration can be lengthy
Observational	Individual testing



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The question is not whether a child is ready for kindergarten but, rather, is the kindergarten classroom ready for the child?



Developmentally Appropriate Practice

Educators intentionally design lessons and classroom layouts using consideration of each child's interests and home life, as well as their physical, socioemotional and cognitive development. Data collected through observations of children as they interact with their peers and environments, combined with a general understanding of age-appropriate milestones, will also inform the classroom model.

Challenging and achievable goals are set for the classroom and each child using the background and observational data collected.

Suggested Reading

"Basics of Developmentally Appropriate Practice" (Eva C. Phillips and Amy Scrinzi)

"Developmentally Appropriate Practice: Focus on Kindergarteners" (Carol Copple, Sue Bredekamp, Derry Koralek, and Kathy Charner)

"Developmentally Appropriate Practice" (Carol Gestwicki)



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"DAP is a set of guidelines used to help make curriculum and teaching strategy decisions" — Phillips and Scrinzi (2013)



Playing IS Learning!

“Play is when children actively explore their worlds, construct ideas they are beginning to understand, and create imaginary situations based on their real-world experiences.” (Phillips and Scrinzi, 2013)

Early learning settings that provide children with opportunities for both “playful learning and learningful play” (Graue, 2006) in structured and unstructured environments will be able to collect robust data about their children to better inform the classroom for improved outcomes.

“Play is essential to development because it contributes to the cognitive, physical, social and emotional well-being of children and youth.” (Ginsburg, 2013)

Playful Classrooms

Teachers who purposefully use play in their classrooms “know where they are headed (standards/goals), plan meaningful learning experiences, and use a variety of effective teaching strategies informed by data (e.g., observations, work samples, family input) to best meet the needs of *each* child in the classroom.”

(Phillips and Scrinzi, 2013)



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“Are you comfortable with an enlivened and active class of fellow learners?” — National Institute for Student-Centered Education



Parent Engagement

Researchers have identified six types of involvement that schools can use to engage parents: (CDC, 2012)

1. Providing parenting support.
2. Communicating with parents.
3. Providing a variety of volunteer opportunities.
4. Supporting learning at home.
5. Encouraging parents to be part of decision-making in schools.
6. Collaborating with the community.

CDC Definition

Parent engagement in schools is defined as parents and school staff working together to support and improve the learning, development and health of children and adolescents. Parent engagement in schools is a shared responsibility [...]

- "Parent Engagement: Strategies for Involving Parents in School Health"



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"Kansas Parent Engagement and Partnership Standards for Early Childhood" is available here
ksdetasn.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/resource/upload/424/KS_Fam_Eng_Part_Stand_Early_Child_web.pdf



Kindergarten Readiness Snapshot Tool

A developmental snapshot looks at a kindergartener's development in the areas of:

1. Language and literacy
2. Cognitive and problem solving
3. Physical well-being and motor development
4. Social-emotional development

An effective snapshot tool aligns with standards and tools already in use!

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KSDE is finalizing details regarding the implementation of a statewide kindergarten readiness snapshot tool.



Redshirting

Giving a child more time to prepare for kindergarten may actually be detrimental to the child, especially if multiple risk factors exist.

Time is not the only component affecting a child's development. The experiences a child receives at home, in the community and in other early learning settings are integral to overall success.

Utilizing developmentally appropriate practice in the kindergarten classroom may be more advantageous to the child's long-term development and academic success than redshirting.

Definition

Redshirting is the term used when the decision is made to hold a child back one year before starting kindergarten, allegedly to give them the "gift of time."

(Phillips and Scrinzi, 2013)



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The only requirement for kindergarten entry in Kansas is that a child be 5 years old on or before Aug. 31 (KS 72-1107(c)).



Successful Transitions

Tips for helping a child transition to kindergarten:

- Allow children to express their feelings about the upcoming transitions through activities such as writing and illustrating a class book about going to kindergarten. Ask them what they think it will be like.
- Provide opportunities to visit the kindergarten classroom throughout the year and engage in joint activities.
- Share kindergarten readiness information with families (e.g., importance of daily reading, practicing self-help skills and early bedtimes).
- Provide open houses, orientations and school visits for families.
- Individual Education Program (IEP) teams should address a smooth kindergarten transition in the child's plan.

Definition

Ongoing communication between preschool and kindergarten teachers (and primary teachers) lets parents know that staff members are dedicated to helping their child be ready for the next step. Successful transition teams have joint opportunities to plan together, share information and network.



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Try the K-W-L format when talking to children about the transition: what we **Know**, **Want** to know and what we have **Learned**



Resources

Early learning is not just the preschool's responsibility. Everyone — parents, school districts and the community — must invest in high-quality learning experiences if Kansas is to lead the world in the success of each student.

[Kansas Early Learning Standards:](http://www.ksde.org/Portals/0/Early%20Childhood/Early%20Learning%20Standards/KsEarlyLearningStandards.pdf)

www.ksde.org/Portals/0/Early%20Childhood/Early%20Learning%20Standards/KsEarlyLearningStandards.pdf

[Kansas School Readiness brochure:](http://www.ksde.org/Portals/0/Early%20Childhood/Birth%20to%20Five%20Collaboration/KSSchoolReadinessBrochure.pdf)

www.ksde.org/Portals/0/Early%20Childhood/Birth%20to%20Five%20Collaboration/KSSchoolReadinessBrochure.pdf

[Kindergarten Readiness FAQs for Administrators and Teachers:](http://www.ksde.org/Portals/0/Early%20Childhood/Kindergarten/FAQ-Teachers-Admin.pdf)

www.ksde.org/Portals/0/Early%20Childhood/Kindergarten/FAQ-Teachers-Admin.pdf

[Parents Guide to Kindergarten in Kansas:](http://www.ksde.org/Portals/0/Early%20Childhood/Kindergarten/KindergartenInKansas.pdf)

www.ksde.org/Portals/0/Early%20Childhood/Kindergarten/KindergartenInKansas.pdf

[Kindergarten Readiness: Help Your Child Prepare:](http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/childrens-health/in-depth/kindergarten-readiness/art-20048432) (for parents) Mayo Clinic

www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/childrens-health/in-depth/kindergarten-readiness/art-20048432



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Additional Reading

“Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children From Birth Through Age 8” (Copple and Bredekamp, 2009)

“Inspiring Spaces for Young Children” (DeViney, Duncan, et al., 2010)

“Starting from the Child” (Fisher, 2008)

“Children’s Play: The Roots of Reading” (Zigler, Singer and Bishop-Josef, 2004)



The burden of readiness should not fall on the shoulders of children” (Phillips and Scrinzi, 2013).



Community Conversations

1. Decide if this is a one-time meeting or an ongoing series.
2. Set a firm beginning and end time. A one-time discussion should be at least two hours. Ongoing talks can be one hour each. Planning is key!
3. An agenda is helpful, but remain flexible. Tackling a topic like children's education can be a major undertaking.
4. Prepare questions to guide the group. (i.e., What's the vision? What opportunities exist? Where are the gaps? How will we fund it?)
5. Invite valuable noneducators, such as parents and community members.

Moderator Tips

- Engage each person early so everyone knows they're equals.
- Keep the group purpose in mind and bring the conversation back to it.
- Don't hesitate to take a break or tell a joke if tensions rise.
- Engage the group with competing ideas or questions; turn the prism.

(Community Conversation Kit, The Harwood Institute)



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School readiness involves the whole child in the context of the family and community.