



## **Prepared for Kindergarten...What Does it Mean?**

A child's future academic success is dependent on being **ready to learn and participate** in a successful kindergarten experience.

Families and educators often have different perspectives about which skills are most important for children's readiness for kindergarten. Families are more likely to focus on cognitive skills while teachers tend to view social-emotional development as more important for kindergarten success. You can view the [Vermont Early Learning Standards](#) on the Vermont Agency of Education website.

The questions and the checklist below were compiled from conversations with CVSD early education teachers, both in private early learning partner programs and school based programs, kindergarten teachers, school counselors, special educators, speech language pathologists, and administrators. If you can answer yes to most of these questions by the summer prior to kindergarten, then your child is likely to enter kindergarten prepared and eager to learn! All age eligible children are welcome to attend school. This document is meant to guide families and teachers in helping children prepare for the transition to kindergarten.

Ask ...	Why is this important?
<b>Does the child participate in pretend or make-believe play?</b>	<i>This kind of play helps children work through conflicts and improve language skills.</i>
<b>Does the child get along well with other kids? Do they share and know how to take turns?</b>	<i>They will be interacting with other children all day, so your child's social skills are particularly important for success in school.</i>
<b>Can the child work together with others as part of a group?</b>	<i>The ability to put their needs second, to compromise and join in a consensus with other children, is a part of emotional competence.</i>
<b>Can the child explain "how to" get ready for bed, pick up toys, brush their teeth? Will they follow the routine?</b>	<i>The ability to explain and plan for simple routines is an important skill.</i>
<b>Can the child listen to 2 step instructions and then follow them?</b>	<i>These skills help children keep up with the teacher and with their peers.</i>
<b>Can the child put on their coat? Use the bathroom independently?</b>	<i>Children need to have basic self-help skills to manage self-care tasks without help at school.</i>
<b>Can the child hold a pencil? Cut with scissors?</b>	<i>These fine motor skills will allow a child to participate in literacy activities and classroom projects.</i>
<b>Does the child show an interest in books? Do they try to "read" a book by telling a story based on the pictures?</b>	<i>This is a sign that language and literacy skills are developing. Reading to your child daily has been shown to improve vocabulary and other literacy skills.</i>
<b>Is the child curious and excited about learning new things?</b>	<i>If a child's curiosity is stronger than their fear of the unfamiliar, they will likely be more comfortable entering kindergarten.</i>

# CVSD Kindergarten Checklist

Every child develops in their own way. There is no perfect formula that determines when children are truly ready for kindergarten. The information on the front of this handout describes some important skills that will help your child be prepared for kindergarten.

This checklist includes additional skills found on most kindergarten checklists. Keep in mind, young children change fast -- if they can't do something this week, they may be able to do it a few weeks later.

	<i>Almost Always</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Not Yet</i>
<b>Play skills:</b> <i>sharing, turn taking, interacting with peers, playing alone or making a choice, cooperating</i>			
<b>Follow the group plan:</b> <i>sit, wait for short periods, follow routine, rules of the classroom</i>			
<b>Communication Skills:</b> <i>ask for help, problem solve with a peer, relay a story, sequence events or retell a favorite book</i>			
<b>Social emotional competencies:</b> <i>self-regulation, problem solving and conflict resolutions, empathy (awareness of others and their feelings), wait, define emotions, recover from disappointment, accept "no"</i>			
<b>Independence:</b> <i>dress/undress with minimal support, separate from adults, eat, open snacks, use the bathroom (toileting), wash hands</i>			
<b>Habits of learning/values:</b> <i>curiosity, attention, persistence, perseverance, problem solver, kindness</i>			
<b>Motor skills:</b> <i>using writing tools with nearly typical grasp, cutting with scissors, building with small manipulatives, dressing, climbing, running, safely using the playground</i>			
<b>Early literacy:</b> <i>pretend to read, recognize and perhaps write name, rhyme words and clap out or recognize syllables</i>			
<b>Early Math:</b> <i>sort, count, recognize patterns in the environment</i>			

*If you have questions regarding readiness for kindergarten, please contact your local elementary school. Your preschool teacher is also a great resource.*