

**Are You Ready?**  
A Parent's Guide  
to Starting Kindergarten



# The Whole Picture

## Ready Child



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## Ready Family



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## Ready Schools



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**Fostering healthy  
development**

**Guiding families to  
support their children's  
education**

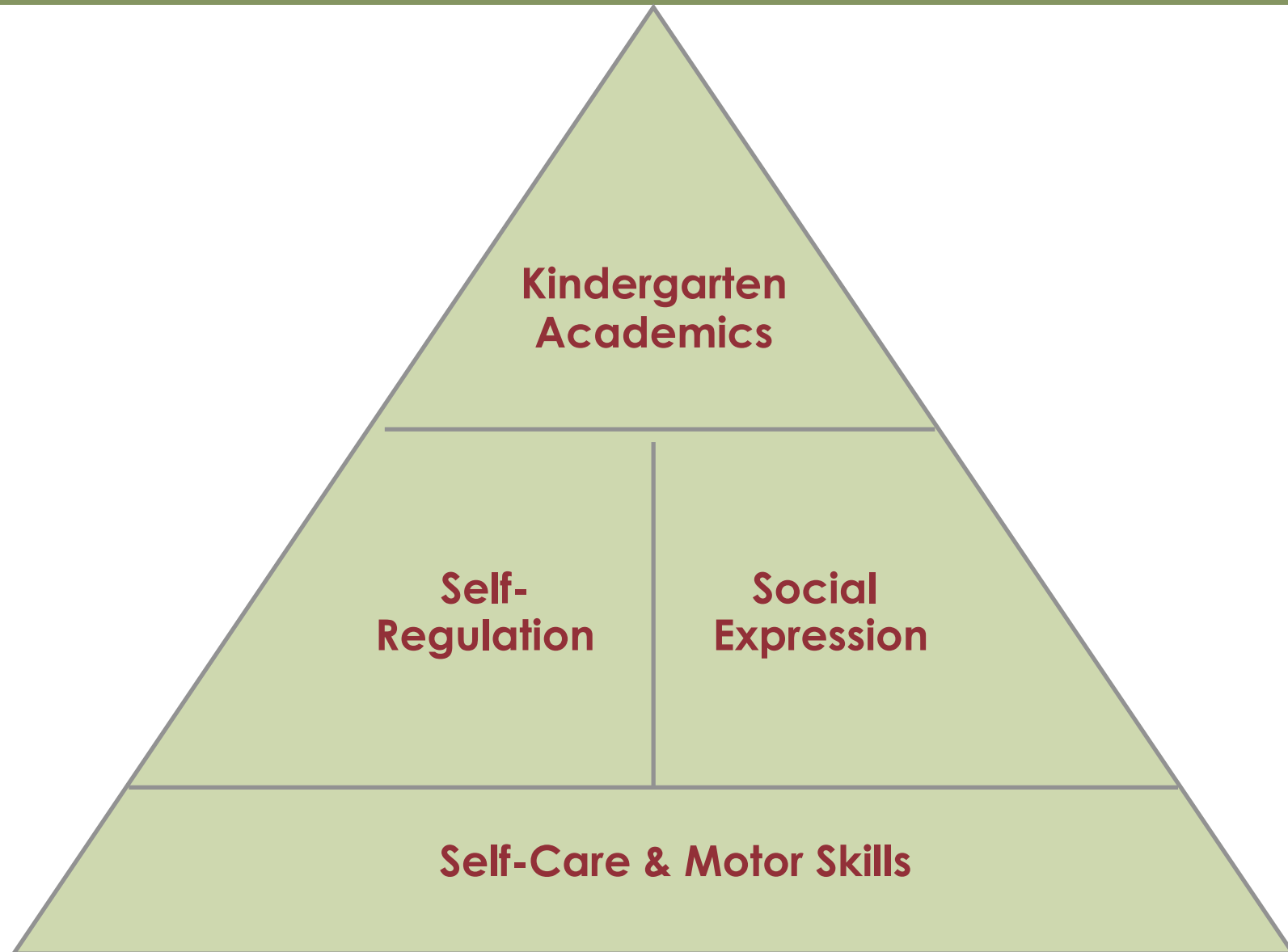
**Strengthening our  
schools – world class  
standards, strong  
leadership, effective  
teachers and  
community  
accountability**

# Goal – Every Child Successful

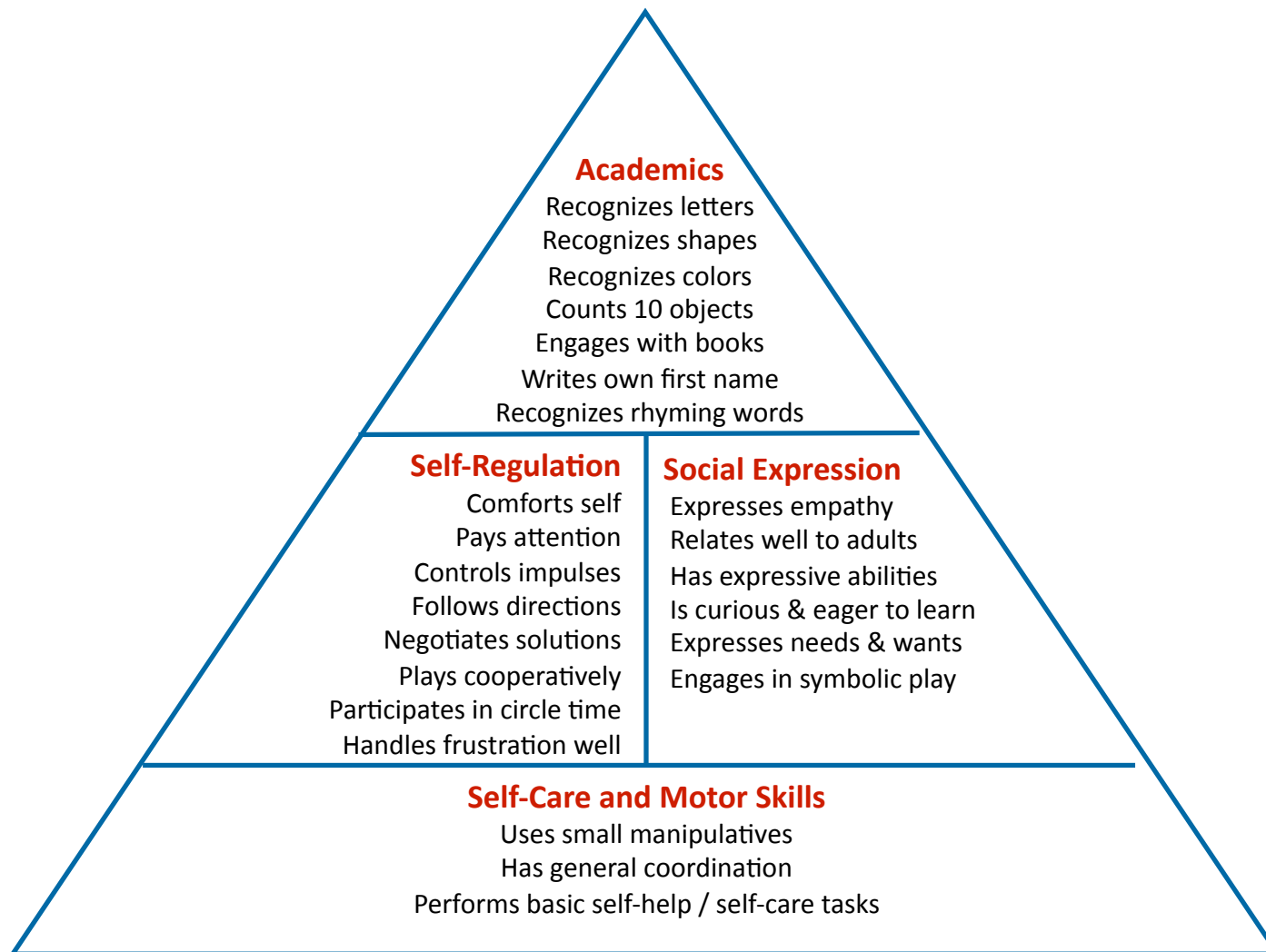
- Bill of Rights – Every child has the right to a 21<sup>st</sup> century education that promotes success in life, in future careers and a love of life-long learning
- Children are individuals. Classrooms should work well for all children, including those with special needs



# Basic Building Blocks of Readiness

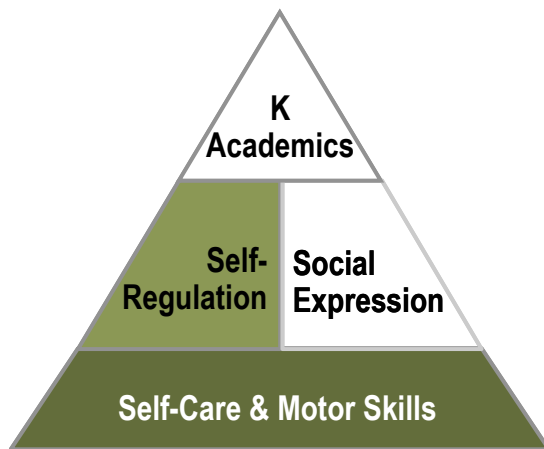


# Basic Building Blocks of Readiness

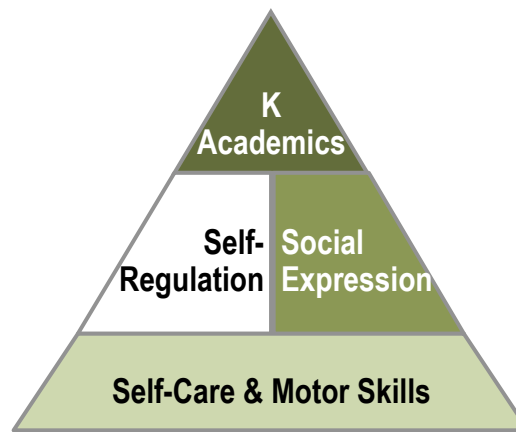


# K Teacher Priorities for Readiness

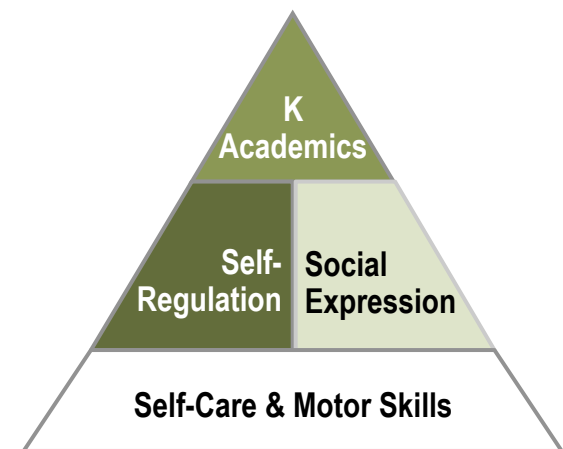
Lowest      Highest  
→



**Relative Importance of Each Building Block**



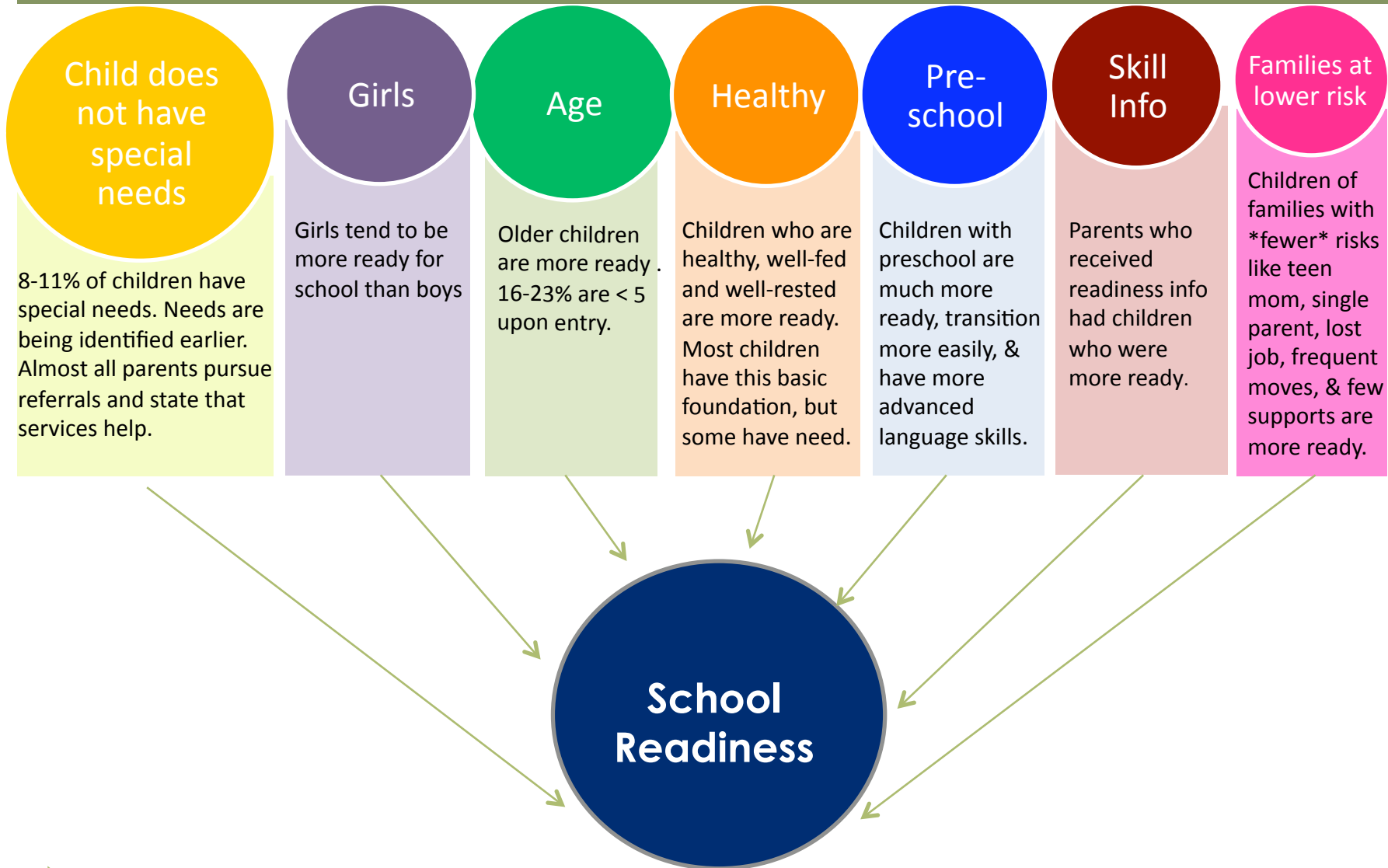
**Relative Ease-of-Changing Each Building Block**



**Relative Amount of Time Spent on Each Building Block**

Data from 2008 SCC Teacher Expectation Survey (internal data)

# What factors contribute to readiness?



This chart depicts the results of regression analyses to predict school readiness. The factors above “school readiness” were predictors in both Santa Clara and San Mateo counties. Additional predictors were significant in only one of the counties; these can be found in the reports. Both regression models were highly significant, although more variance was explained in San Mateo than in Santa Clara.

# Launching Into an Adventure!



- ▣ Kindergarten is a new beginning for:
  - ▣ learning,
  - ▣ developing friendships,
  - ▣ confidence and
  - ▣ independence.



# What is the Right Age for Kindergarten?

- ▣ Children who turn 5 on or before December 2<sup>nd</sup> of the school year are eligible for kindergarten
- ▣ Children in kindergarten classrooms range in age from 4 years 9 months to 6 years old
- ▣ Is your child ready? If you have questions, you can talk to:
  - ▣ Your child's doctor
  - ▣ Your child's preschool teacher
  - ▣ Other parents with children in kindergarten
  - ▣ Your local school administration and teachers

# What is Kindergarten Readiness?

- ▣ Children need a balance of skills when they enter kindergarten:
  - ▣ Social and emotional development
  - ▣ Self care, physical well-being and motor skills
  - ▣ Language development
  - ▣ Early academics



# Social and Emotional Development



- Healthy social and emotional skills in young children include:
  - Relating well to adults
  - Problem-solving and cooperating with friends
  - Showing they care about others
  - Being curious and eager to learn
  - Expressing needs and desires appropriately
  - Engaging in pretend play

# Self Regulation

A child with strong self regulation skills is able to:

- Be patient
- Take turns
- Follow directions
- Plan, organize and set goals
- Control her actions and reactions
- Pay attention to a teacher or a friend



**It takes a LONG time to develop self-regulation. We need to keep our expectations age-appropriate!**

# Developing Self-Regulation

- ❑ Provide structure and predictability
  - ❑ Routines
  - ❑ Chores
  - ❑ Family rules
- ❑ Listen actively to your child
- ❑ Play turn-taking games
- ❑ Help children put themselves in another's place and respect differences
- ❑ Give two and three step-directions

# Self-Regulation Builds Self-Reliance



- A strong sense of their own abilities
  - “I can do it!”
- The feeling that they matter
  - “My family needs me!”
- Personal influence over their lives
  - “I can make things better!”

## Self-Care, Physical Well-Being, Motor Skills

- ▣ *Set good routines before school starts*
- ▣ Children need 10-12 hours of sleep a night!
- ▣ Healthy meals lead to healthy minds
- ▣ Exercise!
  - ▣ At least 30 minutes of physical activity a day
  - ▣ No more than 1-2 hours of TV and computer time.
- ▣ Provide many opportunities for your child to use crayons, paintbrushes, scissors and other fine motor activities like building blocks



# Language Development

- Beginning at birth, talk, talk, talk to your child at every opportunity!
- Read to your child at least 10-15 minutes a day
- Ask your child questions and listen to the answers
- Speak in your home language – learning 2 languages helps!
- Sing songs and tell stories





# Take Time to Listen Too!

- Demonstrate active listening
  - Focus your attention when your child is talking
  - Respect your child's point of view
- Encourage your child to practice putting their own ideas into words



# Language Development



## I'm ready for school when...

- I hear and understand the meaning of words, stories and songs
- I use words to talk about thoughts, wants and needs
- I speak clearly enough so that other people understand
- I use complete sentences and connect ideas together in language
- I have a strong foundation in my home language, which can help me with learning English

# Early Academics



- ❑ Confidence helps build skills, so offer lots of encouragement!
- ❑ Help your child learn how to sort, compare and count
- ❑ Inspire a love of reading
- ❑ If you don't read English, you can tell a story while looking at the book!
- ❑ Help your child learn the alphabet, numbers, colors and shapes using your everyday environment

# Children Learn Through Play!



# Bridging Home and School for English Language Learners

- ❑ Language is an essential part of culture and self-identity.
- ❑ Knowing your home language helps children value your culture.
- ❑ Talk your child's teacher. Ask how you can help and how you can share your home culture at school.
- ❑ A strong foundation in the home language helps children learn a second language.



# Building Family-School Partnerships

- ▣ Education is a partnership between parents, teachers and the school
- ▣ Talk to your child's teacher if you have any questions
- ▣ If possible, spend time in your child's classroom as a volunteer
- ▣ Help your child with homework
- ▣ Join the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) or English Language Advisory Committee (ELAC)

# Is Your Child Ready?

- ▣ Readiness looks different for each child.
- ▣ Parents are usually the first to notice if their child needs additional support.
- ▣ Your child's preschool teacher might have ideas for activities you can do together at home to get ready for kindergarten.
- ▣ If you have concerns about your child's development, make a list and visit your child's doctor and ...
  - ▣ Contact your local school district to request a developmental assessment any time after the 3rd birthday.
  - ▣ For children 0-3 years old, contact Golden Gate Regional Center at (650) 574-9232.

# How do I enroll my child?



- Contact your school district to ask about:
  - The kindergarten registration timeline and process.
  - What documents you will need to enroll.
  - What after-school options are available.
  - If you have a choice of schools.
- Your child will need physical and dental exams, including up-to-date immunizations.



Questions?



For more information contact:



[www.first5sanmateo.org](http://www.first5sanmateo.org)



[www.sccpsr.org](http://www.sccpsr.org)



**FIRST 5**  
SANTA CLARA COUNTY

[www.first5kids.org](http://www.first5kids.org)

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