



Are you Ready?

A Parent's Guide
to Starting Kindergarten

Training Manual

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First 5 San Mateo County and the Silicon Valley Community Foundation are pleased to present “Are You Ready? A Parent’s Guide to Starting Kindergarten,” a resource guide and DVD designed to support children and families in the transition to kindergarten.

Research has shown that children who are well-prepared for school have smoother transitions into kindergarten and are more successful throughout their school years. “Are You Ready?” provides parents with information they need to help their children thrive in their future school settings.

This training manual is designed to support education and family support professionals in a variety of settings, such as:

- Parent education workshops in preschool settings
- Parent-teacher conferences in preschool or kindergarten settings
- Kindergarten orientations and information nights
- School tours for parents of entering kindergarteners
- Home visits to families with preschool-age children
- Family resource center parent trainings

The manual follows the outline of the printed guide and includes:

- Learning objectives for trainers and parents
- Key points for each section of the guide
- Group discussion questions for trainings and workshops
- One-on-one discussion questions for settings such as parent/teacher conferences
- Frequently Asked Questions
- DVD companion guide

The “Are You Ready?” companion DVD follows a similar, though not identical, format to the guide. If you are showing the DVD as part of a presentation, you may want to use it to emphasize important topics, pausing it part way through to pose questions or to check for understanding. You will find a comparison chart for the DVD and written guide in section 6 of this training manual.

We hope you and the families you work with enjoy these materials!

For more information, please visit our websites at www.first5sanmateo.org or www.siliconvalleycf.org.

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Learning Objectives

Learning Objectives for Trainers:

As a result of reviewing this training manual, parent educators will be prepared to:

- Use the Kindergarten Readiness Guide (KRG) and DVD as parent education tools;
- Discuss the basic building blocks of school readiness and the importance and value of balance in all four domains:
 1. Social and emotional development
 2. Self care, physical well being, and motor skills
 3. Language development
 4. Early academics
- Conduct engaging, interactive workshops with parents;
- Answer questions about age and developmental readiness for kindergarten entry;
- Discuss basic enrollment and registration processes and requirements (e.g. immunizations, etc.);
- Emphasize the value of parents' involvement in their children's education and the value of bridging home and school cultures;
- Encourage families to maintain and engage children in their home languages and cultures.

Learning Objectives for Parents:

As a result of participating in a training, parents will:

- Have a basic understanding of the four building blocks of school readiness and a strong understanding of the importance of balance in all four domains;
- Understand the value of parent involvement and the variety of ways in which they can be engaged in their child's education;
- Learn practical ideas for school readiness activities they can share with their children;
- Understand the importance of early literacy activities, including engaging with books, talking, listening, singing songs, playing rhyming games and limiting TV and computer time;
- Understand the value of self-regulation and practical ways to help children develop regulation skills;
- Be informed of some of the red flags that may indicate a need for screening and/or assessment with the child's doctor or school district.

Launching into an adventure!

(Print Guide - Page 1)

Key Points

- Starting kindergarten is an exciting adventure for kids and their families. It is a new beginning for learning, developing friendships, confidence and independence.
- However, it is also normal for children and parents to feel anxious about starting kindergarten.
- It is important that our children are excited and proud on their first day of school.

Discussion Questions

- How does your child feel about starting kindergarten?
- How do **you** feel about your child starting kindergarten?
- Do you have any fears or concerns? Let's talk about them.
- Describe one thing you are excited about and one thing that worries you or your child.

What is kindergarten readiness?

(Print Guide - Page 3)

Key Points

- Kindergarteners are still growing and developing. At age 5, children have lots of energy. Some are focused on running and climbing in the playground. Others like to draw pictures or play with blocks or toys.
- Children who come prepared for kindergarten have smoother transitions into school and do better throughout their school years
- Very few children have mastered all of the skills they will need in kindergarten before they start school.
- To be most successful, children need a balance of skills in each of the four building blocks of kindergarten readiness.
- The four Basic Building Blocks of Readiness are:
 1. Social and emotional development
 2. Self-care and physical development
 3. Language development
 4. Early academics

Discussion

- As we progress through today's training, think about where your child fits on the continuum of readiness in each of the basic building blocks of readiness.
- Keep track of your questions.
- Remember that each child develops at a unique pace and so it is unlikely that your child will meet all of the kindergarten readiness targets in each of the four building blocks at this point in the year.



What is the right age for kindergarten?

(Print Guide - Page 5)

Key Points

- Children who turn 5 on or before December 2nd of the school year are eligible to enroll in kindergarten.
- The youngest children in class will be 4 years 9 months and the oldest will be almost 6.
- Not all children who are eligible are ready to go to kindergarten. Sometimes waiting a year can help children build a balance of skills.

Discussion

- See “Frequently Asked Questions” on page 15 for many discussion points.

Social and Emotional Development

(Print Guide - Pages 7-9)

Key Points

- Children who can share their ideas and feelings are able to solve problems.
- Being ready for school also means learning how to be part of a group and follow directions.
- Children who have a strong sense of self-esteem are more likely to have positive learning experiences in school.
- Healthy social and emotional skills in young children include:
 - Expressing empathy
 - Relating well to adults
 - Engaging in cooperative play with peers
 - Problem-solving and conflict resolution with peers
 - Recognizing and labeling emotions
 - Being curious and eager to learn
 - Expressing needs and wants appropriately
 - Engaging in pretend play
- Making friends, learning to cooperate and solving conflicts with peers are among the key tasks of kindergarten
- It is important to teach children that all feelings are okay, but not all actions are okay. For example, it's okay to be upset but not okay to hit someone.

Group Discussion Questions

- What are some ways your families can help your children develop social and emotional skills? *Examples: Enroll your children in preschool! Make playdates with friends. Ask your child how she is feels about starting kindergarten. Be a good role model by talking about how you're feeling. Help your children learn how to resolve conflicts with their peers – don't just jump in and fix their problems for them.*

One-on-One Discussion Questions

- Is your child comfortable asking an adult and/or a friend for help when she needs something? *This is an important skill worth practicing before school starts.*
- How does your child handle conflicts when they arise among his peers?
- Does your child have good control over her actions and reactions?

Self-Care, Physical Well-Being and Motor Skills

(Print Guide Pages 11-12)

Key Points

- A good night's sleep will help your child grow and be ready to pay attention during the school day.
- When your child can take care of his or her personal needs, such as going to the bathroom, washing hands and dressing himself or herself, he or she is ready to learn in school.
- Now is also a great time to reinforce healthy eating habits. Your child needs to have energy and be alert for school. Focus on healthy choices for breakfast and school lunches or snacks.
- Make time for active play and exercise. Exercise will help your child cope with the new structure and expectations of school (Children should get at least 30 minutes of physical activity a day and no more than 1-2 hours of quality TV and computer time).

Group Discussion Questions

- Do you have successful strategies you can share with the group for redirecting your child away from the TV and/or computer toward other activities?
- Do you have any favorite healthy, kid-friendly foods you can share with the group?
- Did you know that most school lunch programs also offer breakfast at school?

One-on-One Discussion Questions

- How many hours does your child sleep at night? Does he naturally wake up by the time he'll need to get ready for school? If not, try to begin transitioning his bed times as soon as possible.
- Do you feel that your child is getting enough exercise? If not, let's talk about some ways you can increase that time.
- Do you have access to a pediatrician and dentist? If not, do you need help finding one?
- Does your child have opportunities to practice using crayons, paintbrushes and scissors? Can he or she kick a ball, hop on one foot and climb a ladder?
- Does your child know how to blow his nose, wash his hands and use the toilet without adult supervision?

Language Development

(Print Guide Pages 13-16)

Key Points

- Language skills are thinking skills. The more children hear words and practice using them, the more ready they will be to learn at school.
- In kindergarten the teachers will use words to describe things (smooth, red, fast), to introduce math concepts (big, bigger, biggest) and to explain ideas like telling time and rules in the classroom.
- Family conversations during dinner, telling stories about your day, playing imagination games with friends and reading books to your child are all great ways to build language skills.
- The more you talk to your child about ideas and activities in your everyday life, the bigger her vocabulary will be and the more prepared she'll be to learn to read, write, do math and succeed in school and life
- Read and tell stories to your child as often as possible – the more the better - at least 15 minutes of reading every day!
- If you speak a language other than English at home, continue to speak that language with your child. Children and adults who speak 2 or more languages are at a great advantage in our expanding global village.

One-on-One Discussion Questions

- Does your child have a strong foundation in your home language?
- Can she speak clearly to express her ideas and feelings in complete sentences?
- Do you have any concerns about her speech development? *Speech and language delays account for a majority of special needs among young children in the county. Encourage families to go to their school district for an assessment if they are concerned about their child's speech. Early intervention is best.*
- Do you take your child to the library? *There are so many wonderful, free books and storytimes at all of the libraries, so make sure you take advantage of them!*
- Do you have good storytellers or singers in your family or community? *If so, encourage them to tell stories and sing to your children often.*

Early Academics

(Print Guide - Pages 17-19)

Key Points

- Offer your child lots of encouragement and praise. Children who are self-confident learn to read and write more easily.
- Look for shapes in everyday objects. Doors are rectangles, pennies are circles.
- Sing songs and play rhyming games.
- Keep pencils, crayons and paper where children can get to them easily.
- Point out letters and numbers in everyday places like cereal boxes, store signs and books.
- Help your child learn how to sort, match and compare. For example, you can talk about colors, textures and sizes by matching socks by color and size while folding laundry.
- Teach your child to count. “How many chairs are at the table? How many steps to the bedroom?”
- Continue to use your home language while engaging in these activities.
- Remember, children learn through play!

Group Discussion Questions

- Can you think of ways that you already engage your child in learning games in your daily activities? Can you suggest any ideas to the group?
- Are you able to set aside time for reading or story-telling every day? If not, can you think of ways to increase reading time with your child? Do you have any favorite books you’d like to share with the group?
- What do you think we mean by “Children learn through play?”

One-on-One Questions

- Does your child know the letters of the alphabet? How to count to 10? How to write her first name? Basic colors and shapes? *These are good skills to work on before kindergarten starts, but don’t force them in a way that makes your child dislike learning. (Tip: As the teacher, you may be able to share this information with the parent.)*
- Do you enjoy your reading and story time together? If not, can you find ways to make it more enjoyable?

Bridging Home and School for English language learners

(Print Guide - Pages 21-22)

Key points

- Language is an essential part of culture and self-identity.
- Home language helps children to value the connection to their culture, which then contributes to a strong sense of identity.
- Positive self-esteem and a strong sense of identity help children have more positive learning experiences in school and throughout life.
- Children have meaningful learning experiences when they are related to their families' lives.
- A strong foundation in the home language positively impacts the learning of a second language.

Group Discussion questions

- Did you know that children's brains are very flexible and they are very capable of learning 2 or more language at once? In fact, a strong foundation in their home language supports children's learning English.
- Have you ever noticed children mixing two languages? Don't be surprised if you do - this is a natural part of the learning process!

One-on-One Discussion Questions

- Do you or your family members speak a language other than English at home?
- Do you have any questions about speaking your home language with your child as she gets ready to enter kindergarten?
- Do you tell stories and/or read books in your home language? (*encourage parents to do this!*)

Getting ready - Are you worried that your child isn't ready?

(Print Guide Pages 23-25)

Key points

- Remember that kindergarten readiness looks different for each child.
- If you are worried about your child's development or have noticed that your child's skill level seems very different from other children her age, make a list of your concerns and visit your child's doctor and ask her preschool teacher

Talk to your child's doctor if you see a few of the following behaviors on a regular basis:

- Frequent temper tantrums
- Difficulty with normal changes in routine or when moving from play time to quiet time
- Overly aggressive behavior with other children or appearing very withdrawn
- Restless behavior compared to other children and easily distracted
- Difficulty holding a crayon or pencil or copying basic shapes
- Trouble hearing or understanding when others are talking
- Difficulty pronouncing simple words
- People outside your family have difficulty understanding your child
- Difficulty walking, running or climbing

Remember, many children have some of these behaviors. Watch to see if they happen all the time or if there are specific situations in which they are more likely to occur.

Your child has a right to a developmental assessment from your local school district after her 3rd birthday (or Regional Center before then)?

Group or One-on-One Discussion questions

- If you have concerns that your child isn't ready for kindergarten, do you now have the information you need to determine your next steps?

Tip: try not to spend too much time in a whole group talking about a specific child or children – encourage parents to talk to you at the end of the workshop or to contact their doctor or preschool teacher for more information.

My child is ready for kindergarten. How do I enroll him or her?

(Print Guide – Pages 24-25)

Each school district has different timetables and requirements for enrollment. Use the information at the back of this guide to contact your school district for specifics.

Questions to ask include:

When should I enroll my child?

- Registration generally ranges from December-March of the year before kindergarten. *(say something here about how you can register anytime, up to and beyond the first week of school?)*

What documentation is required?

- Each district has different requirements, but generally, you should expect to provide the following:
- Proof of residency (address). This can be a PG&E bill and/or a phone bill and is not related to immigration status.
- Immunization record
- Child's original birth certificate
- Your child will need a physical and dental exam and up to date immunizations before starting school

Do I have a choice of schools? (e.g. charter, magnet)

- Some districts provide some choice of schools such as magnet schools with an arts or language focus.

Do you have a list of available after-school programs?

- If you think you'll need child care for your child after school, it is a good idea to find out about your options and pre-register as early as possible.
- You can contact the Child Care Coordinating Council to get a list of after-school programs in your area.

I've enrolled my child – now what?

- Talk to your child about what a typical school day will look like.
- Visit the school with your child and meet the teacher, if possible.
- Play at the school playground over the summer and on weekends to familiarize your child with her new environment
- Help your child choose a backpack to bring on the first day of school!
- Make sure your child know some basic safety information:
 - First and last name
 - Full names of parents
 - Who will pick her up after school each day
 - Food allergies or restrictions
 - To walk away and find an adult he or she knows if approached by a stranger
 - How to find the classroom, bathroom and the school office
 - If possible, teach your child your phone number

Building Family-School Partnerships

(Print Guide - Pages 27-29)

Key Points

- Remember that helping your child be prepared and ready to enter school is just the beginning of the adventure!
- As parents, you play a key role in the ongoing success of your child at school.
- Let your child know that you have high expectations and that his or her education is important.
- If your child has special needs, make sure the school and teacher know about them and are prepared to help your child succeed.
- Education is a partnership between parents, teachers and the school.
- There are many ways you can participate in your child's education. For example:
 - Talk to the teacher.
 - Spend time in your child's classroom as a volunteer.
 - Join a Parent Teacher Association or PTA.
 - Join an English Language Advisory Committee or ELAC.
 - Help your child with homework.
 - Talk to your child's teacher about ways you can share your home culture at school.

Group Discussion Questions

- Have you had any experiences participating in your child's education or activities in preschool or elementary? Can you share a highlight of your experience? A challenge?

One-on-One Discussion Questions

- Do you think you'll feel comfortable talking to your child's teacher? If not, what would help you feel more confident?
- Does your child have special needs? If so, it is especially important that you talk to the teacher before school starts.

Resources

(Print Guide - Pages 30-32)

Child Care

The Child Care Coordinating Council is San Mateo County's child care resource and referral agency for information about child care, including after-school programs and subsidized care for children 0-13. www.sanmateo4cs.org or (650) 655-6770.

Health and Human Services

The Community Information Program and the Peninsula Library System provide information about health and human services for county residents.

<http://cip.plsinfo.org> or (650) 802-7950

Kindergarten enrollment

Each school district has its own time line for kindergarten registration, so it is important that you contact your local school or district to find out how, when and where to enroll.

Types of schools

Most children attend their neighborhood school, the boundaries of which are determined by the school district. Some districts provide a choice of schools to attend, including magnet schools and charter schools. Contact your school district for specific information about schools of choice.

San Mateo County districts' contact information

Contact information is included in the written guide.

“Are You Ready? A Parent’s Guide to Starting Kindergarten”

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. My child will be 5 before December 2nd, but I’m not sure she is ready for kindergarten...or My child won’t turn 5 until February, but she is academically advanced and ready for kindergarten.

A. In almost every parent workshop there will be parents who feel that their child should be accelerated *and* those who are thinking about holding their child back. In the ideal world, schools and teachers should be experts at accommodating children with many different developmental variations, but this is not always the possible in today’s classrooms. Ideas to share with parents about a child’s age and overall readiness:

- It is important to think about the child’s readiness across all four building blocks; children who are ready in all 4 areas transition most smoothly and are likely to be able to keep up with kindergarten and first grade expectations.
- Most experts agree that it is generally not in the best interest of a child whose birthday is after the cut off date to participate in kindergarten, even if the child is academically ready.
- Academically precocious children may need more time to develop socially and emotionally, which is critical to children’s long-term success in school and life.
- California does have a later cutoff date than most other states.
- Local trends indicate that many families are choosing to delay kindergarten entry for children with Fall birthdays.
- The kindergarten curriculum is more and more academically focused each year, which can make it more challenging for younger children.
- Parents have a natural tendency to over-estimate their child’s readiness.
- Some schools and principals are willing to work with parents to incorporate elements of the 1st grade reading or math curriculum for children who are ready for that challenge.
- When considering whether to delay kindergarten entry, it is important to think about what the child will do during the extra year.
- California state preschools are generally not allowed to provide subsidized preschool services for children who are eligible for kindergarten.
- If parents of age-eligible children are concerned about their child’s development, they should be encouraged to pursue professional screening and evaluation through the school district.

- There are disadvantages to having children at either extreme of the age spectrum: holding children back means that they will be 18 and 19 years old in high school. These older children are more likely to chafe at the rules and constraints of high school. On the other hand, children who graduate at 16 or 17 are sometimes not socially ready to leave for college.
- Other things that parents can consider when deciding when to start their child include: spacing of siblings, additional costs of child care, the child's physical size and shyness.

Q. My primary language is Spanish. I worry that my child will have trouble learning English if I continue to speak Spanish at home. Should I start speaking English to her now that kindergarten is approaching or should I continue to speak Spanish? Should I read books in English or in Spanish?

A. The number one objective at home should be a strong foundation in the language the family is most comfortable speaking. High quality language is important, so whether a parent should speak English with their child depends on the parent's fluency in English.

- Teaching children to think with their words and to be able to use their words to express their thoughts, ideas and emotions is most important, regardless of the language. Grammar and vocabulary in a second language will come quickly with children this age.
- It is difficult to recommend one recipe for the best approach to developing the child's second language. Basic ideas that we like to reinforce include:
 - Bilingualism is good. Children who speak 2 languages well outperform their mono-lingual peers. Adults who are bilingual are more competitive for jobs. People who are bi-lingual have a better appreciation for different cultures.
 - We want children to retain their home language. This is important for maintaining ties to family and traditions. When parents are mono-lingual in a different language than the one that the child speaks, it can make for some very rocky teenage years. We want children to be able to continue to talk with their grandparents, etc.
 - Families who want to help their children begin learning English can do that by a combination of activities:
 - Choosing a childcare/preschool setting where the child has exposure to native English speakers
 - Reading stories in both English and the home language
 - Finding opportunities to explore English together. Taking specific outings or times of the day to concentrate on practicing English.

Q. I work full time and am not able to volunteer in my child’s classroom during class hours. How can I engage in my child’s education? How can I communicate with the teacher if I don’t see him or her on a regular basis?

A. Many teachers use email and class newsletters to keep parents informed. Back to school night is the perfect opportunity to ask the teacher what his/her preferred communication process is. Most teachers are willing to meet with parents by appointment before or after school if there is a specific concern. Other ideas that might work for some parents:

- Talk to your employer about giving you release time to volunteer in your child’s classroom or school.
- Parent-teacher conferences are an especially important time to connect with your child’s teacher.
- Get involved in parent groups at the school. Often, these groups meet in the evenings or before work. The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) or English Language Advisory Council (ELAC) are good places to start.
- Read everything that the teacher sends home from school – call and ask questions if there is something you don’t understand. Meet other parents from your child’s class and network with them to keep in touch.
- Talk to your child about what is happening in school. Ask questions that require more than a yes/no answer; things like; “Tell me what book you read today in school. What was it about? What classroom job are you responsible for now? Which part of the school day is your favorite? What was the funniest thing that happened, etc.

Q. What are my options for before and after school care?

A. This varies from school to school. When registering for kindergarten, ask if the school has an on-site program for before and after care and/or if they have a list of programs that serve the school. Contact the Child Care Coordinating Council (4Cs) at (650) 655-6770 for referrals to child care and before and after-school providers throughout the county.

Q. What are the most important activities I can do with my child over the summer?

A. The summer is a good time to:

- Talk about what school will be like. Visit the playground and find out where the office and bathrooms are.
- Add more structure and consistency to your normal routines. Bedtimes, wake up times and nighttime stories should be getting more regular.
- Continue to do the school readiness activities described in this booklet.

- Read to your child every day!
- Express your excitement about her starting school.
- Help her pick out a new backpack and lunch box for school.

Q. I can't get my child to go to bed in the summer before 9:30 or 10:00 pm and we don't eat on a regular schedule. How can I get my child on a regular schedule? When should my child stop taking naps?

- Sleep experts say that the best way to establish regular bedtimes is to have regular waking up times in the morning. Children need 10-12 hours of sleep a night.
- During the summer, start weaning your child away from naps and toward an earlier bedtime. It helps to try adjusting the times by just a few minutes (10-15 minutes) every few days.
- Avoid television before bedtime, as TV can be more stimulating than relaxing.
- Make sure that your child gets a good 60 minutes of active play outside every day.
- Start "settling down" about an hour before bedtime. This can happen by turning off the TV, reading books, telling stories, taking a warm bath and making time for organizing the next day's clothes.

Q. Are kids that go to a full day kindergarten more ready for 1st grade? How do I choose between a full day and a part day kindergarten?

A. Research shows that children, especially those at risk, benefit from a developmentally appropriate, full-day program. Benefits include: expanded academic learning time for reading and math; improved student attendance, literacy and language development, social and emotional development and decreased retention and remediation rates. Many families and teachers also point to the increased time for play, deeper exploration of content and fewer transitions for the child throughout the day.

One the other side of the coin, many families feel that their children are exhausted by the new rigors of kindergarten and prefer a half-day program.

Q. Can I visit my child's school before school starts? Can I meet her teacher?

A. Yes, parents can definitely visit school before school starts; generally classrooms observations are scheduled in the Spring. Many schools don't make class lists public until right before school starts, so you may not be able to meet with your child's teacher until after school starts.

Q. Do I have a choice of schools in my district?

A. Most schools assign children to schools based on neighborhood boundaries, but some districts offer schools of choice. Contact your local school district to find out.

“Are You Ready? A Parent’s Guide to Starting Kindergarten”

DVD Time Equivalentents

Time	DVD Section Title	Corresponding pages in guide
PART 1		
:30	Are You Ready for Kindergarten?	P. 1
1:30	What Do You Need to Know?	NA
1:50	What is Kindergarten Readiness?	p. 3
3:00	Social Emotional	p. 7-9
5:00	Self Care, Physical, Motor	p. 11-12
7:05	Language Development	p. 13-16
8:15	Bridging Home and School for ELL	p. 21-22
9:30	Early Academics	p. 17-19
PART 2		
12:50	What is the right age for Kindergarten?	p. 3
13:05	Registration	p. 24
13:50	Afterschool	p. 25 & 30
14:30	Preparing for the 1 st Day of School	p. 25
15:05	Books about the Transition to K	NA
15:20	Parents and Teachers as Partners	p. 27
16:35	Questions? Parent Handbook	NA
17:10	Worries About Your Child’s Development	p. 23
17:25	Acknowledgements	p. 33

“I’m Ready for Kindergarten” Parent Workshop Evaluation Form

Thank you for participating today. Please take a moment to fill out this form. Your feedback will help us improve our presentation for other parents.

Place an 'X' in the box that most closely represents your experience of the training.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Of little interest	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very stimulating					

Please comment briefly why you have given this rating

Not very useful	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very useful					
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Please comment briefly why you have given this rating

I am not likely to use the information I learned in today’s session	<input type="checkbox"/>	I am very likely to use the information I learned in today’s session					
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Please comment briefly why you have given this rating

My questions about kindergarten were not answered.	<input type="checkbox"/>	My questions about kindergarten were answered					
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Please comment briefly why you have given this rating

What questions do you still have about helping your child prepare for kindergarten?

Are You Ready? A Parent's Guide to Starting Kindergarten **Take Home Discussion Guide for Families**

- What are my child's strengths?
- What are 5 ways we can help build our child's language skills? Use examples from page 15 of the guide to help you come up with some of your own ideas.
- What questions do we have for our child's preschool teacher or doctor?
- If s/he does not already attend preschool, what are some ways we can try to provide our child a preschool experience?
- What is our child's bedtime and wake-up time? How do we have to change our routine to ensure that s/he gets 10-12 hours a sleep each night and wakes up in time for school?
- What are some healthy foods our child likes? What can we do to ensure that s/he eats healthy meals and snacks every day?
- What are five ways we help our child learn some early academic skills? Use examples from page 18 to help you come up with some of your own ideas.
- Does s/he have a strong foundation in our home language? Can s/he speak clearly to express his/her ideas and feelings in complete sentences? If not, what are some things we can do to encourage his/her to use our home language more?
- What are our child's favorite playtime activities? What skills do these activities help develop?
- What are some other ways we can play with our child to help improve skills that s/he may still be developing?
- What are some ways we can ensure that we are reading and telling stories to our child every day?
- Does our child know important safety tips? Can s/he write his/her full name, know our address and phone number and who can be trusted for help?
- What is our plan for getting our child to school on time every day and for before-and-after-school care?
- Does our child have identified special needs? *If so, it is especially important that you talk to the school and the teacher before school starts.*