Believe and Become

REACH UP
Resource · Empower · Advocate · Connect · Human rights · Upskill · Peer support
Macarthur Southern Highlands

Willow Health

School Readiness

- This resource provides a checklist of key skills that children *without developmental delay* are likely to demonstrate during a successful transition into mainstream kindergarten.
- It is important to remember that all children are different and have strengths and challenges.
- This checklist is just a guide, and your child does not have to be able to manage everything on this list independently before starting school. It is designed to give you some ideas on things you may wish to continue working with your child on before they start school.
- Many people believe the most important thing about being ready for school is academic knowledge, for example, knowing the alphabet, counting, and naming shapes and colours. However, self-care and social-emotional skills, are equally, if not more important to a successful start to school.
- Many factors impact on children's readiness for school, including social, economic, and environmental factors, access to early learning environments, and the presence of a developmental delay or disability.
- If you have concerns about your child's overall development, or their readiness for school, it's a great idea to connect with your GP, an occupational therapist or speech pathologist as early as possible to seek a professional assessment and advice.

Believe and Become, through the REACH UP initiative, is proudly delivering projects for the Peer Support and Capacity Building (PSCB) grant for the NDIS, including this free resource.

Supporting your child's school readiness

You can help your child's school readiness at home by:

- creating opportunities to interact with other children individually and in groups, for example through play dates, playgroups, or early learning centres
- reading books and talking about them together
- playing games that encourage turn-taking, sharing and following rules
- giving opportunities to follow 2-3 step instructions (eg: pick up your bag and come to the car)
- providing opportunities to practice fine motor skills like drawing, colouring, cutting, and pasting
- providing opportunities to learn and talk about feelings, and practice coping strategies to deal with frustrations
- providing varied opportunities for play, eg. role play, construction, pretend play, puzzles and games, arts and crafts, sensory play
- spending time outdoors working on running, jumping, skipping, throwing, catching, and climbing
- encouraging increasing independence with self-care tasks including dressing, using the toilet, and washing hands
- encourage them to look after their belongings, and help pack for day trips/outings
- engaging in conversations throughout the day and modelling correct grammar and sentence structure
- giving opportunities to practise opening lunchboxes, drink bottles, packages etc
- modelling listening and taking turns in conversations
- supporting them to learn to ask for help when needed
- having predictable morning and evening routines
- encouraging problem-solving rather than jumping in to help e.g. "what could we try?"

School Readiness Checklist

Self-care skills

I can...

- [ ] ask for help when I need it
- [ ] wash and dry my hands
- [ ] wash and dry my face
- [ ] ask to go to the toilet when I need to
- [ ] pull my pants up and down
- [ ] wipe/clean myself after using the toilet
- [ ] use a tissue to blow/wipe my nose
- [ ] put on my hat
- [ ] put on my shoes and socks
- [ ] put on my jacket
- [ ] manage a zipper
- [ ] manage buttons
- [ ] eat with cutlery
- [ ] access my food in my lunchbox and open containers
- [ ] put my hat and lunch box in my bag
- [ ] take care of my belongings
- [ ] taste a variety of foods
- [ ] hold hands and stay safe in the community
- [ ] follow safety rules

Social-emotional skills

I can...

- [ ] say please and thank you when needed
- [ ] use words to describe how I am feeling
- [ ] express frustration safely
- [ ] share toys with a friend
- [ ] take turns when playing and communicating
- [ ] help pack away my toys
- [ ] join in on activities with others
- [ ] transition smoothly between tasks
- [ ] listen and follow instructions
- [ ] transition away from caregivers
- [ ] cope with unexpected changes in routine

School Readiness Checklist

Early learning, speech and language skills

I can...

- [ ] recognise my name
- [ ] use speech to meet my wants and needs
- [ ] speak in full sentences
- [ ] use clear speech that others can understand
- [ ] understand and use a range of nouns (names), verbs (doing words) and adjectives (describing words)
- [ ] understand basic place, time, inclusion and sequence concepts like on/under, now/later, all/just one, first/then
- [ ] understand time concepts like morning, afternoon, night, today, yesterday, tomorrow
- [ ] ask and answer simple what, who and where questions
- [ ] search a picture to find and name specific objects
- [ ] talk about similarities and differences between basic items and pictures
- [ ] attend to a preferred task for at least 10 minutes
- [ ] sing simple rhymes
- [ ] sit and listen to a short story
- [ ] count to 10 or beyond
- [ ] count a small group of objects
- [ ] recognise some numbers
- [ ] recognise the sounds associated with some letters
- [ ] recognise shapes like square, circle, triangle, diamond, rectangle, heart, star
- [ ] recognise basic colours like red, yellow, blue, green, orange, purple, pink, black and white

School Readiness Checklist

Fine motor skills

I can...

- [ ] hold a pencil with a functional grasp
- [ ] use one hand consistently to hold a pencil (have a dominant hand)
- [ ] use my "helper" (non-dominant) hand to assist with tasks
- [ ] copy my name
- [ ] write my name
- [ ] draw pre-writing shapes like / \ I - O X
- [ ] fold a piece of paper in half
- [ ] string beads
- [ ] pick up small objects using a pincer grasp
- [ ] draw simple shapes like a circle, square, triangle
- [ ] draw a simple person
- [ ] colour in
- [ ] use glue to paste together a picture
- [ ] cut along a straight line
- [ ] cut small snips into paper
- [ ] cut out simple shapes
- [ ] build a tower and 'steps' out of blocks
- [ ] mould playdough into a ball, worm and pancake

Gross motor skills

I can...

- [ ] walk up and down stairs using a handrail
- [ ] move to music
- [ ] catch and throw a large ball
- [ ] kick a large ball
- [ ] stand on each foot for 5 seconds
- [ ] hop on either foot
- [ ] jump with both feet together
- [ ] skip with alternating feet
- [ ] climb over a climbing frame