

Is my child ready for kindergarten?

The end of winter and the beginning of spring mean different things to different people.

To my husband it is time to get the golf clubs out. To my daughter, it is time to start training for the triathlon season. Young children cannot wait to take out their bikes and true Twins fans are awaiting the beginning of baseball season and the opening of the new stadium.

But to the parent of a 5-year-old, soon-to-be kindergartner, it means time to turn their thoughts to school and the age-old question: "Is my child ready for kindergarten?"

Kindergarten readiness causes many of us to pause and think about what skills children really need to be ready to succeed as a kindergartner.



Photo courtesy of Bethlehem Lutheran Preschool

Beach day at Bethlehem Lutheran Preschool provided children an opportunity to learn cooperative play skills, a key component of kindergarten readiness.

It is great if they know all the letters and sounds of the alphabet, recognize numbers and count to 100. The

list goes on and on. As you ponder your child's entrance into school, these abilities are not going to guarantee

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success for your child.

If your child gets along with others (children and adults), follows directions, identifies and regulates emotions, solves problems, shows persistence in tasks, engages in conversation and cooperative play, recognizes their own and others' emotions, and feels good about themselves and others, they are well on their way to a successful start to their school experience.

Children with strong social/emotional skills are ready to learn and make the transition from child care, preschool and home to the exciting world of elementary school.

Well-developed social/emotional skills give children

the confidence to build relationships, develop friendships and be ready to learn.

As your child is preparing for this next big step, remember that children learn everything they need to be successful in school through play-based activities. They build social skills, increase language and literacy capabilities, become logical thinkers, solve problems and develop creativity when engaged in play.

Each child comes to school with different levels of readiness.

Look at your child and trust that you have given them many experiences that have prepared them to be ready for the next step.

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