



Take Care

HEALTHY TIPS for SUMMER 2024

Even though school is almost out, it is never too early to start thinking about the upcoming school year- especially if you have a child starting Kindergarten! Here are some tips and tricks to help your kiddo be ready to start kindergarten, and to help older children beat the "Summer Slide" while still having fun in the sun! While helping your children learn, always remember to take care!



Is Your Preschooler Ready for Kindergarten?

The Children's Health Foundation is a non-profit organization that partners with your Pediatrician to develop quality health care programs in our community. We work together to foster the highest quality care for children, to raise awareness on health issues, and to achieve better children's health outcomes. Please ask your provider for more information.

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We aren't just talking about academics. Your child's social, emotional, and behavior skills are equally critical to school success, and too many U.S. children start kindergarten without them.

In this article, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) highlights rapidly expanding research on how you can determine school readiness and help your child prepare. (*Hint: helping your child do well at school begins long before the first day of kindergarten*).

According to the AAP report on "School Readiness," young children's experiences—beginning at birth—play a big role in how well they learn to handle their feelings, relate to and communicate with others, and enter school ready to learn and achieve their full potential.

What does "school readiness" mean?

The idea that some children are "ready for school" by 4 or 5 and others are not is controversial. Just as children begin to walk or talk at different ages, they also develop the psychological and social skills needed for school at varying ages.

When you're deciding when your child should start kindergarten:

- Look carefully at your child's development. Is your child able to communicate? How are his listening and social skills? Would he be able to get along with other children and adults? Is he toilet trained? What about physical skills like running, playing, or using a crayon or pencil?
- Talk with your child's pediatrician about developmental milestones and community resources that support them.
- Ask your child's preschool teacher and/or childcare provider for feedback. He or she can often provide some useful, objective observations, and information.
- Trust your instincts—you know your child best!

Source: American Academy of Pediatrics (Copyright © 2019)

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School readiness milestones

Important development milestones that help school go smoothly for children include:

Sensory development: the ability to use touch, sight, and hearing to explore and figure out the world around them.

Social, emotional, and behavioral development: such as being able to:

- focus and pay attention
- control impulses and emotions
- take turns
- cooperate and follow directions
- make friends
- empathize with others
- control and communicate emotions
- limit aggressive behaviors

Early language, literacy, and math skills: such as being able to talk, listen, and understand concepts like sound-letter associations, numbers, shapes, and how objects are related to each other.

Limit preschool apps and shows—even if they are educational.

Online preschool activities and educational apps and shows should not take the place of important learning that takes place with face-to-face interactions and real-life experiences. The AAP recommends screen time other than video chatting is best avoided for children under 18 months old. Make a family media plan to help balance screen time with time spent exploring the world and communicating and socializing with people around them that's so important to a child's development.

Misconceptions about “redshirting:”

Some parents consider delaying their child's entrance into kindergarten even though they are old enough to start school, especially if they have a child with a birthday close to the school entry cut-off date. This is called “redshirting,” and it's a practice that some states are considering legislation to end.

Parents who hold their children back from kindergarten may believe they are giving them a better chance to succeed in academics, athletics, or social settings if she is older than average for her grade. This isn't necessarily the case.

According to the AAP, labeling children as “not ready” for kindergarten and delaying the start of school can prevent them from being in the best learning environment.

Although there is some evidence that being among the youngest in a class may cause some academic problems, most of these seem to disappear by the third or fourth grade. On the other hand, other research suggests that children who are old for their grade are at considerably greater risk of behavior problems when they reach adolescence.

Early education starts and ends at home.

You are your child's first and greatest teacher. Put down your smartphone. Reinforce what your child learned in preschool. Find time to talk with your children about their respective days—including what they did at school. Plan some activities that you can do with your child—such as an art project.

If you have questions or concerns about your about whether your child is ready to start school, always talk with your pediatrician.

A word about kindergarten screenings or readiness testing:

Some schools may conduct their own tests to evaluate your child's abilities. So-called “readiness tests” tend to look mostly at academic skills, but may evaluate other aspects of development, too. The tests are far from perfect; some children who do poorly on them do just fine in school.

The AAP believes kindergarten testing or screening should be used as a tool to guide curriculum and instruction and support diverse groups of children rather than a gatekeeping test for children to enter school.

So, if the test or screening identifies some areas where your child seems to lag behind, use the information to help you and the school plan for the special attention he may need in the year of kindergarten ahead.

You are your child's best advocate. By sharing information with your child's teacher and other school staff, you can help them be ready for your child. At the same time, you are establishing a partnership for your child's education that can and should continue throughout her childhood.

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tax-free.



Why invest with the OREGON COLLEGE SAVINGS PLAN?

- Get a refundable tax credit.
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What about the KINDER GRAD program?

- Any Oregon Kindergartner who is 5 or 6 years old is eligible for Kinder Grad when an account is opened on their behalf.
- All qualified accounts will receive the \$25 contribution within three months of the account being opened.
- There's a limit of one \$25 match per child.

A kick start for Oregon kindergartners.

Open an Oregon College Savings Plan account for your kindergartner, and get an extra, automatic \$25 contribution with our Kinder Grad program. Remember, students with a college savings account — even a small one — are 2.5 times more likely to go to college than those with nothing set aside.



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Open an account at:
oregoncollegesavings.com/get-started
oregoncollegesavings.com/kinder-grad

Beat the “Summer Slide”!

The “Summer Slide” or also known as “summer learning loss” is the setback in children’s reading, writing and math skills over summer break that can lead to children falling behind from where they need to be for the next school year. You can beat the “summer slide” anywhere!

“Preventing the summer slide is not just about maintaining academic skills, it’s about keeping the fire of learning alive in our children.”

– Erica Reischer, author and psychologist.

Have your kiddos check the boxes by the activities they want to do!



At home:

- Play board and card games, do jigsaw puzzles.
- Do word puzzles like crosswords and sudoku. There are many free printables online!
- Practice everyday skills with little ones like tying or fastening shoes, working zippers and buttoning shirts.
- Learn a new skill like cursive writing, coding, or knitting via the internet or books.
- Become pen pals with a family member or friend and write and send paper letters or practice typing skills by sending email messages.
- Plan a backyard scavenger hunt; older kids can do this on their own.
- Create a scrapbook of the summer with photos, writing and found items.
- Create a weekly reading challenge or competition between family members on who can read the most books.



In the car:

- Sing songs.
- Practice spelling by doing a spelling bee.
- Run through math facts like counting by twos or multiplication tables.
- Spot objects that begin with each letter of the alphabet.
- Read road signs and billboards out loud.
- Practice directions like turn left or turn south.
- Turn off the verbal prompts on a map app and read directions out loud.
- Listen to kid-oriented podcasts on topics like science, space or mysteries.



At the Park:

- Look for different leaves, trees, rocks, insects, clouds, wildflowers and weeds.
- Listen for birds using a free app like Merlin to identify them by how they look or their songs.



At the Library:

- Find out what reading clubs and programs are offered
- Choose something new like comic books, magazines, cookbooks, or music recordings.
- Visit the library's exhibits and special events.
- Sign up for summer reading challenges.
- Do an in-depth study of a person, place, or event in history.



In your community:

- See if any retirement homes in your area let students come and read to the residents.
- Start a book club or book swap in your neighborhood.
- Have your kids take pictures of the community and use them to tell a story. Have them experiment with different angles and perspectives!
- Find free cultural experiences, festivals, and celebrations to learn about new cultures.
- Have your children think of a community service project, big or small! Some ideas are picking up trash at parks, volunteering at animal shelters, or collecting food for food pantries.



At the grocery store:

- Write down the grocery list.
- Read signs throughout the store.
- Weigh produce.
- Use a calculator to add up the grocery bill as you go.
- Compare multiple items/sizes/quantities to determine the best deal.
- Count the number of items in the cart.
- Use scissors to clip coupons.
- If using cash, count the amount of money and change for the grocery bill.



In the kitchen:

- Create a meal plan and talk about the different food groups.
- Measure the size of the pan needed.
- Read recipes out loud.
- Measure both dry and liquid ingredients.
- Count the number of ingredients.
- Cut fruits and vegetables into specific sizes, such as 1/2 of an apple or 1/4 of a banana.
- Talk about the nutrition facts on food labels.
- Divide foods into portions at meals.

Information for Parents About Sunburn & Sunscreen

Warm, sunny days are wonderful. It's good for children to spend time playing and exercising outdoors, and it's important they enjoy it safely. Here are some tips on how to help keep your family safe from too much exposure to the sun's harmful rays.

Sun Safety

What you wear can protect you

Hats to protect the face, ears and neck

Sunglasses to protect the eyes. Look for youth-sized sunglasses with at least 99% UV protection

Choose cool, comfortable clothing that covers the body for additional protection



Simple rules to protect your family from sunburns

- Keep babies younger than 6 months out of direct sunlight. Find shade under a tree, an umbrella, or the stroller canopy.
- When possible, dress yourself and your children in cool, comfortable clothing that covers the body, such as lightweight cotton pants, long-sleeved shirts, and hats.
- Select clothes made with a tight weave; they protect better than clothes with a looser weave. If you're not sure how tight a fabric's weave is, hold it up to see how much light shines through. The less light, the better.
- Look for protective clothing labeled with an Ultraviolet Protection Factor (UPF).
- Wear a hat with an all-around 3-inch brim to shield the face, ears, and back of the neck.
- Limit your sun exposure between 10:00 am and 4:00 pm when UV rays are strongest.
- Wear sunglasses with at least 99% UV protection. Look for youth-sized sunglasses with UV protection for your child.
- Use sunscreen.
- Make sure everyone in your family knows how to protect his or her skin and eyes. Remember to set a good example by practicing sun safety yourself.

Sunscreen

Sunscreen can help protect the skin from sunburn and some skin cancers but only if used correctly. Keep in mind that sunscreen should be used for sun protection, not as a reason to stay in the sun longer.

How to choose a sunscreen

- Use a sunscreen that says "broad-spectrum" on the label; that means it will screen out both UVB and UVA rays.
- Use a broad-spectrum sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15 (up to SPF 50). An SPF of 15 or 30 should be fine for most people. More research studies are needed to test if sunscreen with more than SPF 50 offers any extra protection.
- If possible, avoid the sunscreen ingredient oxybenzone because of concerns about mild hormonal properties. Remember, though, that it's important to take steps to prevent sunburn, so using any sunscreen is better than not using sunscreen at all.
- For sensitive areas of the body, such as the nose, cheeks, tops of the ears and shoulders, choose a sunscreen with zinc oxide or titanium dioxide. These products may stay visible on the skin even after you rub them in, and some come in fun colors that children enjoy.

How to apply sunscreen

- Use enough sunscreen to cover all exposed areas, especially the face, nose, ears, feet, hands and even backs of the knees. Rub it in well.
- Put sunscreen on 15 to 30 minutes before going outdoors. It needs time to absorb into the skin.
- Use sunscreen any time you or your child spend time outdoors. Remember that you can get sunburn even on cloudy days because up to 80% of the sun's UV rays can get through the clouds. Also, UV rays can bounce back from water, sand, snow, and concrete, so make sure you're protected.
- Reapply sunscreen every 2 hours and after swimming, sweating or drying off with a towel. Because most people use too little sunscreen, make sure to apply a generous amount.

Sunscreen for babies

- For babies younger than 6 months: Use sunscreen on small areas of the body, such as the face, if protective clothing and shade are not available.
- For babies older than 6 months: Apply to all areas of the body, but be careful around the eyes. If your baby rubs sunscreen into their eyes, wipe their eyes and hands clean with a damp cloth. If the sunscreen irritates their skin, try a different brand or sunscreen with titanium dioxide or zinc oxide. If your baby develops a rash, talk with their doctor.

Sunburns

When to call the doctor

If your baby is younger than 1 year old and gets sunburn, call your their doctor right away. For older children, call your child's doctor if there is blistering, pain or fever.

How to soothe sunburn

Here are 5 ways to relieve discomfort from mild sunburn:

- Give your child water or milk to replace lost fluids.
- Use cool water to help your child's skin feel better.
- Give your child pain medicine to relieve painful sunburns. (For a baby 6 months or younger, give acetaminophen. For a child older than 6 months, give either acetaminophen or ibuprofen.)
- Only use medicated lotions if your child's doctor says it is OK.

- Keep your child out of the sun until the sunburn is fully healed.

Remember

The sun gives energy to all living things on earth, but it can also harm us. Its ultraviolet (UV) rays can damage skin and eyes and cause skin cancer. One-quarter of our lifetime sun exposure happens during childhood and adolescence.

Since children spend a lot of time outdoors, especially in the summer, it's important to protect them from the sun. Talk with your pediatrician if you have any questions about sun protection for your child.

