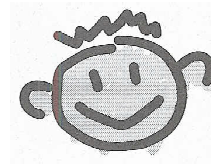


Fours

Kindergarten Readiness



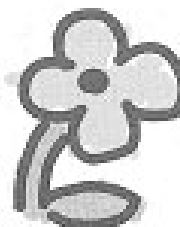
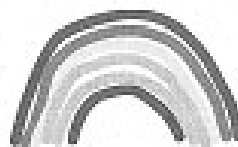
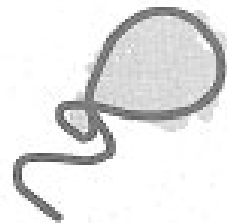
A child development checklist and tips booklet

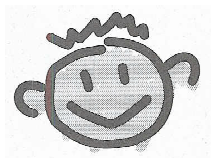


This booklet was originally developed by the Preschool Kindergarten Partnership (PKP) of Pinellas County and written and revised by a group of early childhood professionals in the community. The Pinellas Early Childhood Collaborative (PECC) provided funds for the original printing of this booklet. The booklet is one in a series of resource booklets on child development. The series contains:

- **Infants**
- **Ones**
- **Twos**
- **Threes**
- **Fours**

To obtain booklets in this series, please call 547-5800.





Introduction

Starting Out

You are your child's first and most important teacher.
Each day, your child is learning as you talk, play, and work together.

Child development is a combination of age, individual growth and experience. Your child will develop at his/her own rate; the key is to maintain appropriate expectations for your child.

Your child will learn by doing. Play is an essential part of learning. Your child learns best when involved in activities that are interesting and fun.

This booklet is designed to help you look at your four year old child's physical, social, emotional, and cognitive (concept and language) development.

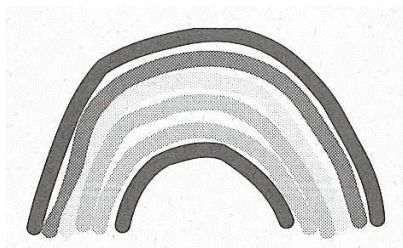
It provides checklists and tips to help guide you as you work and play with your child.

The checklists contain items that are important to your child's success in kindergarten. These checklists are designed to be used with four year olds. The criteria for many items on the checklists should not be applied to children younger than four years of age.

If, after completing the checklist, you have some concerns about your child being successful in kindergarten, you may wish to call FDLRS Child Find for additional assistance (727-462-1588).

This booklet is one in a series of resource booklets on child development. The series also contains a booklet on infant, one year old, two year old and three year old development.

To obtain any of the other booklets in this series, please call 727-547-5800.



Concept Development

DOES YOUR CHILD...

	Yes	Not Yet
...match or sort items by color and shape?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...copy simple patterns?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...ask questions such as, "What will happen if...?"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...understand concepts such as: more, less, first, last, middle, beside, behind, above, below, near, far?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...find things that are the same or different?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...draw a picture of her/himself including head, body, arms, and legs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...demonstrate curiosity, persistence, and exploratory behavior?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...count objects (one to ten)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Concept Development Tips

Young children construct their own understanding of concepts as they interact and work with materials, people, events, and ideas.

Parents can help this process by:

- Providing age appropriate toys which require thinking such as puzzles, blocks, or sorting toys.
- Offering paper and fabric scraps, bits of ribbon, boxes, etc. to use for creative experiences.
- Counting objects around the house (plates and forks for the table, crackers for snacks).
- Playing games with your child using words such as: Put the ball on the chair. Get the pot from under the sink. Play Simon Says – e.g., (Simon Says, "Put your hands under your feet. Put your hands over your head.")
- Giving your child opportunities to discover that things change (e.g., ice cubes, making jell-o, mixing colors).
- Recognizing the pattern in a book by hesitating and asking your child to say the next line before turning the page.
- Including your child in simple cooking experiences (pouring, measuring, stirring, spreading).
- Allowing your child to string cereal (e.g., Fruit Loops), in a repeated pattern (pink, green, pink, green, etc.).



Health and Safety

DOES YOUR CHILD...

	Yes	Not Yet
...have a set routine and schedule for preparing for bed (e.g., brushing teeth, taking a bath) going to sleep, and eating meals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...use good habits (e.g., closes mouth when chewing, covers nose and mouth to sneeze, washes hands after toilet and before eating)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...follow simple safety rules?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...visit the doctor and dentist regularly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...eat healthy foods?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Health and Safety Tips

“Children must have their basic needs for health care and nutrition met if they are to be prepared to achieve in school.” – Marian Wright Edelman

Parents can help this process by:

- Making sure your child has regular medical checkups, up-to-date shots, and prompt medical attention if needed.
- Remembering trips to the dentist and regular tooth brushing.
- Reminding your child to get rest and establishing a set bedtime.
- Establishing a rest routine and set bedtime for your child.
- Providing opportunities for your child to get exercise. Limit TV/Computer time.
- Providing swimming lessons for your child.
- Modeling and encouraging healthy eating, and limiting junk food.
- Teaching your child simple safety rules (e.g., fire, traffic, bicycle, poisons).
- Keeping a watchful eye on your child and removing hazards from your home and outdoor play areas
- Having home fire drills.
- Posting 911, poison control center and other emergency numbers on or near all of your telephones. Practice emergency situations to use 911.
- Alerting your child to the dangers of strangers, drugs and guns.



Physical Development

DOES YOUR CHILD...

	Yes	Not Yet
...go up and down stairs, alternating feet, without holding the railing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...put 9-12 piece puzzles together?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...cut simple shapes with scissors?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...zip, button, and try to tie her/his shoes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...enjoy outdoor play such as running, jumping, hopping, skipping and climbing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...hold a crayon, pencil, or marker correctly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...ride a tricycle following a path?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...throw a ball aiming at a target?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Physical Development Tips

Children need physical skills to be successful in school.
Daily opportunities to use large and small muscles should be provided.

Parents can help this process by:

- Taking your child to a park to play on outdoor equipment, such as slides, seesaws, swings.
- Allowing your child time to dress her/himself including zipping, buttoning, snapping.
- Providing experiences with scissors such as cutting on a line and cutting pictures from a magazine.
- Providing opportunities to use crayons, markers, pencils, pens, chalk, hole punches, glue sticks, etc.
- Providing opportunities for your child to play with balls, tricycles and jump ropes.
- Allowing your child to use clothespins to hang things up. (e.g., paintings, pictures, doll clothes)
- Providing opportunities for your child to twist caps off plastic jars.



Language

DOES YOUR CHILD...

	Yes	Not Yet
...talk in sentences?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...follow through when you give her/him two or three step directions? (e.g., Put on your shoes and go get the broom.)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...use descriptive language? (That's a tall building with round windows.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...use simple conversational sentences?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...sing and/or recite nursery rhymes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...use sentences that include two or more separate ideas?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...pretend, create and make up songs and stories?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...talk about everyday experiences?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...ask questions about how things work in the world?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...express her/his ideas so that others understand?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...recognize her/his name in print?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Language Tips

The development of language abilities – listening, speaking, reading, and writing is critical to children's success throughout their school years and the rest of their lives. It is tied to everything children learn or do in school. Parents can support the development of language abilities by talking with and listening carefully to children as they share their ideas and experiences.

Parents can help this process by:

- Getting down at eye level and showing your interest as you and your child engage in conversation.
- Using questions which have more than one answer such as: "What do you think?", "How would you feel?"
- Encouraging your child to talk with you about the stories you read together.
- Talking about "new words" and what they mean as you read books and/or engage in activities with your child.
- Playing rhyming games (e.g., finding a word that rhymes with another).
- Letting your child know what she/he says is important by listening intently.
- Encouraging other members of the family to listen as they engage in conversation with your child.
- Providing opportunities for your child to "deliver a message" from home to school.
- Sharing jokes and riddles with your child.

Writing

DOES YOUR CHILD...

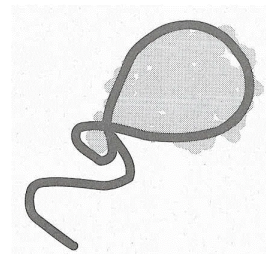
	Yes	Not Yet
...attempt to write her/his name?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...show an interest in writing alphabet letters?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...attempt to copy or draw shapes, letters and numbers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...have a collection of paper, pencils, and crayons?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...like to receive notes from you and others?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...ask you to write words or notes to people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...write on a chalkboard with chalk and/or try to create words on a magnetic board with magnetic letters?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...attempt to invent her/his own spelling while writing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...write stories?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...see you writing (e.g., notes, recipes, lists, letters, reminders)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...ask you to write a word or specific letters so he/she can copy them?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Writing Tips

To become skilled, lifelong writers, children need encouragement and support as they begin the writing process. They'll play at writing like they play at reading. Ask them to read what they've written. Children go through various stages of writing development. These stages include scribbling and pretend writing.

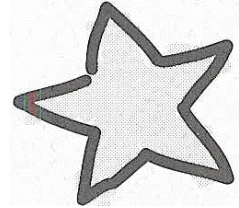
Parents can help this process by:

- Providing materials (e.g., crayons, pencils, markers, paper) and a space for writing.
- Focusing on what your child can do – Praise each success, no matter how small.
- Having a place to display your child's writing efforts.
- Watching your child as she/he writes on a chalkboard, at an easel or on a clipboard with paper, etc.
- Answering your child's questions about writing.
- Accepting trial and error (e.g., scribbles, pictures, alphabet soup).
- Making signs to label objects in your child's room and other rooms in the house.
- Letting your child see you write notes, recipes, lists, reminders, vocalizing about what you are writing.



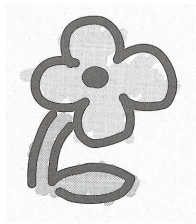
Writing Tips (Cont'd)

- Encouraging your child to read her/his writing to you.
- Providing magnetic letters for your child to practice forming names and words.
- Encouraging your child to invent her/his own spelling for words (e.g., shopping lists, reminder notes, messages, signs, stories).



Special Note:

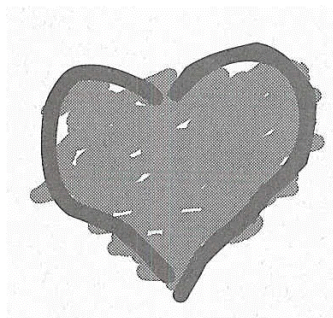
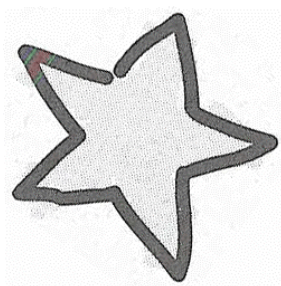
Remember to respond to the message and content of what your child is writing about, not how it looks on the surface. Writing is not just copying. By providing opportunities to write as part of your daily family routine, you will keep your child interested and excited about writing.



Reading

DOES YOUR CHILD...

	Yes	Not Yet
...enjoy getting a book for a present?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...have many books of her/his own and a special place to keep them?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...take good care of his/her books?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...recognize her/his first name?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...recognize the letters in his/her first name or some letters of the alphabet?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...look at books or pictures independently?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...like you to read to him/her?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...read stories or verses to you? (e.g., shares verses or stories read at school; reads or pretends to read her/his library books).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...try to read in everyday situations? (e.g., street signs, store signs, cereal boxes, newspapers, magazines, TV advertisements)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...try to talk about or retell the stories or verses heard at school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...try to read along with you on favorite parts of the story or sentences that are repeated over and over again?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...see you reading (books, magazines, letters, newspapers, recipes, etc.)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...know any nursery rhymes by heart?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...know the sounds of some of the letters?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Reading Tips

Reading a book to children is an enjoyable and interesting experience. It should be part of the daily family routine. It is the most important way in which parents can help children learn to read.

BEFORE reading a story:

- Introduce the book, discussing the cover, title, author and illustrator.
- Look at the pictures to discover what the story is about.
- Discuss special or new words that are in the story.
- Talk about places, people and things in the story with which your child is familiar.
- Remember to keep the introduction simple and quick.

DURING the story reading:

- Allow time for your child to look at and talk about the pictures. (Pictures and illustrations are very important.)
- Talk with your child about the characters and story events.
- Ask questions: What do you think is happening? How would you feel if that happened? What might happen next? (prediction) Would you ever do that?
- Did you think that would happen?
- Ask your child to ask questions as you read and answer his/her questions.
- Accept and be positive about your child/s responses to your questions.

AFTER the story reading:

- Go back to the beginning and have your child turn the pages and share comments or questions he/she might still have.
- Have your child retell the story to you.
- Compare the story situations to your child's experiences. Could you do that? Has that ever happened to you? Did we ever do that?

Parents can help this process by:

- Providing a wide variety of books for your child, including fiction and non-fiction, nursery rhymes and fairy tales.
- Giving your child books as presents throughout the year.
- Providing a library card for your child and using it regularly.
- Providing a special place for your child to keep books.
- Helping your child learn to take care of books.
- Making reading a part of your daily routine.
- Accepting your child's "pretend" reading.
- Providing a place to read that is comfortable and quiet.
- Providing a wide variety of reading materials (magazines, newspapers, recipes).
- Pointing out print in the environment (signs, cereal boxes, restaurants).
- Reading your child's favorite stories over and over again.
- Allowing your child to select the story that she/he would like to hear.
- Playing rhyming games with your child (e.g., matching rhyming pictures or objects).
- Playing games having your child name objects or places that start with a specific sound (e.g., the first sound in his/her name).

Social and Emotional Development

DOES YOUR CHILD...

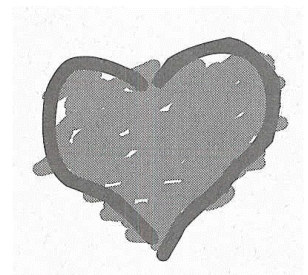
	Yes	Not Yet
...use words to solve problems when angry or frustrated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...use words such as “please”, “thank you” and “excuse me”?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...attempt new tasks knowing it is okay to make mistakes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... do things for him/herself (e.g., dress self, put toys and belongings away, take care of own toileting needs)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...have success in taking turns and sharing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... interact appropriately with peers and have friends?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...ask for help when necessary?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...stay with an activity to completion? (e.g., finish a picture, build something with blocks/legos)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...follow through when you give directions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...comply with rules, limits, and routines?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...interact appropriately with adults?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
...respect the rights, property and feelings of others?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Social & Emotional Development Tips

Children must be socially ready for school. Parents can help their children get ready for school by giving them the opportunity to be part of a group of children, whether in a playground or a preschool classroom. Children need to know how to: take turns, make compromises, approach familiar children, obey those in authority (principals and teachers) and generally be nice to others.

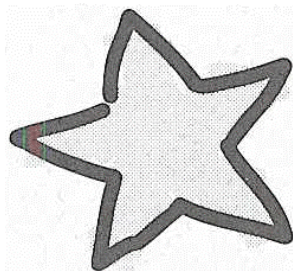
Parents can help this process by:

- Remembering discipline is teaching your child how to behave rather than punishing her/him for misbehavior.
- Remembering to always show love for your child and let her/him know it's the misbehavior you dislike.
- Having high, yet realistic, age appropriate expectations for your child. Understand your child's limits.
- Letting your child know exactly what is expected.
- Letting your child know what he/she SHOULD do, as well as what he/she should NOT do.
- Treating your child and others with respect and setting a good example.



Social & Emotional Development Tips (Cont'd)

- Being positive by using praise and encouragement. Accept your child's honest efforts without criticism.
- Showing your love and saying, "I love you!" frequently to your child.
- Giving hugs and smiles, and spending happy times together.
- Helping your child find words to describe feelings.
- Letting your child know all feelings are okay.
- Teaching acceptable ways of expressing feelings.
- Telling your child when she/he does things right.
- Involving your child in choosing daily clothing, dressing, and taking care of personal needs whenever possible.
- Telling your child about the fun things you remember from school.
- Setting the tone that learning is good, fun, and important.
- Encouraging your child to attempt new tasks and support her/him when she/he is unsuccessful.
- Providing opportunities for your child to be with other children such as by joining a playgroup, going to story time at the library or playing at the park.
- Describing ways your child can solve disagreements with others.
- Showing your child how to be a friend.
- Modeling the use of words such as please, thank you, and excuse me.
- Giving your child small responsibilities around your home (making her/his bed, picking up toys, emptying trash, taking care of pets, helping in the yard). Let your child know you respect her/him for being responsible.



Registration

The First Day of School Tips

The following are suggestions from some Pinellas County Kindergarten Teachers:

- ★ Visit the school and classroom prior to the first day.
- ★ Meet the teacher before the first day of school.
- ★ Begin the “going to bed/getting up routine” a week prior to the start of school.
- ★ Make sure your child has a good breakfast.
- ★ Allow your child to ride the bus the first day of school (if that will be the daily routine). You can meet the bus at school.
- ★ Discuss arrangements for dismissal. Find out about any special dismissal procedures from your child’s teacher.
- ★ Label ALL personal belongings with your child’s name.
- ★ Put any money your child takes to school in an envelope with your child’s name and state what the money is for.
- ★ Make sure your child is dressed in clothing that she/he can manage at bathroom time.
- ★ Provide a special place at home for school materials (backpacks, notes, lunch money).
- ★ Set aside a special time at the end of the day to talk to your child about her/his day.
- ★ Ask your child questions about the first day:
 - What was your favorite part of the day?*
 - What did you learn today?*
 - Tell me about your friends.*
- ★ Check with your child’s teacher or school before buying any supplies.
- ★ Teachers are very busy supervising children during arrival and dismissal. This is not a good time to talk to the teacher.

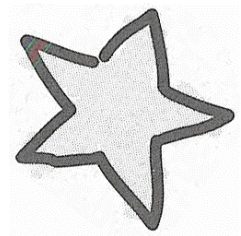


If you are planning to enroll your child in a public kindergarten next year you must register your child and make school choices in the attendance area in which you live. Parents may also apply to countywide magnet or fundamental school programs. Parents preregister their children at a Family Education and Information Center and submit an application during the Sept. 1-Nov.1 application period. A computer match process assigns students to an elementary school. Parents complete the registration process at their child's assigned school in the spring.

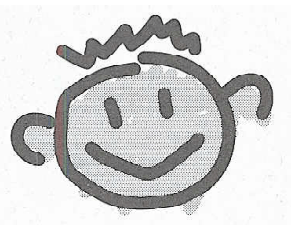
Note: The Student Assignment Department will assign students who have not preregistered and turned in an application by Nov. 1.

You will need to bring the following to a Family Education and Information Center to preregister your child:

- ☐ **Birth Certificate** (original or certified copy of other proof of birth.)
Children must be 5 years old on or before Sept. 1 of the year they start kindergarten.
- ☐ **Proof of Residency** (a utility bill or lease agreement that includes the parent or guardian's name and street address).
- ☐ **Child's Social Security number** (preferred but optional).



**For more information, visit www.pinellaschoice.org
or call a Family Education and Information Center:**



1101 Marshall St.
Clearwater
727-298-2858

3420 Eighth Av. S.
St. Petersburg
727-552-1595

Once you have been assigned a school, you will need to register your child at that school and bring the following:

- ☐ **Florida Certificate of Immunization** – must be up to date and include specific dates (month/day/year) immunizations were given.
- ☐ **Physical Examination** signed by a licensed physician (within 12 months prior to enrollment).