

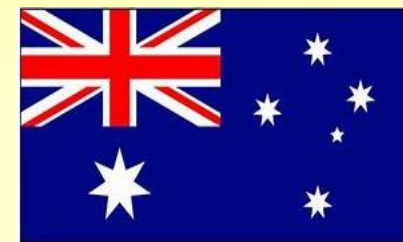


Manly State School

Promoting School Readiness

Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Education, Training and Employment and the Qld Indigenous Education Consultative Committee acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands from across Qld and pay our respects to the Elders past, present and emerging, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the state.



What is school 'readiness'?

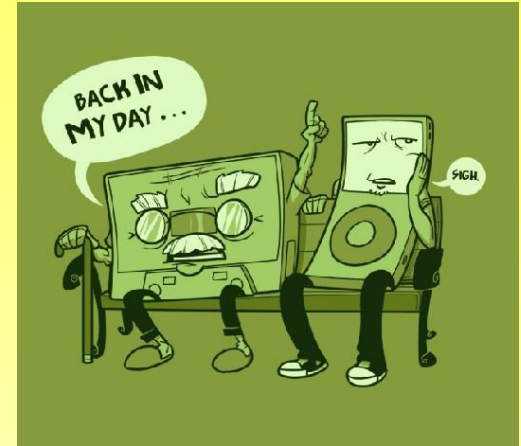
Those **skills and behaviours** that children have developed by the time of **school entry**, which allow them to **adjust well to school** and to **get the most out of the learning experiences** they encounter.



Blair C. School readiness: Integrating cognition and emotion in a neurobiological conceptualization of children's functioning at school entry. *Am Psy.* 2002; 57:111-127.

In the past...

school readiness focused on 'pre-academic' skills such as *counting and letter recognition*



NOW...

researchers and early years educators emphasize the importance of **social-emotional competencies**, such as the ability to *follow instructions, inhibit impulses, and focus attention*

Why does it matter?

Deficits in school readiness can create **long-term difficulties** for children. Those who enter school behind their peers in terms of basic social and emotional development are at **risk for a number of negative outcomes**, including

- **Lower achievement,**
- **Difficulties making and keeping friendships,**
- **Lower interest in and commitment to school work**
- **Earlier and higher drop out rates**

Research has identified a **powerful role for warm, sensitive parent-child relationships** in the promotion of children's social and emotional development. It appears that **patterns developed early on, influence school readiness** through their **effects on children's developing thinking and self-regulation skills**. Sensitive, responsive parenting has been linked to the development of **executive function and attention control**, both of which are essential for a successful transition to school.

McCabe KM, Clark R, Barnett D. Family protective factors among urban African American youth. *J Clin Child Psy*. 1999; 28:137-150.

Bernier A, Carlson SM, Deschense M, Matte-Gagne C. Social factors in the development of early executive functioning: A closer look at the caregiving environment. *Dev Sci*. 2011; 1:1-13.

Hughes C, Ensor R. Independence and interplay between maternal and child risk factors for preschool problem behaviors? *Int J Beh Dev*. 2009; 33:312-322

What does all this mean?

Your children will become who you are; so be who you want them to be.

-anonymous

What you
DO
speaks
so loud
that I
CANNOT
hear
what you
say.

RALPH
WALDO
EMERSON

If children live with criticism, they learn to condemn.

If children live with hostility, they learn to fight.

If children live with **ridicule**, they learn to be shy.

If children live with **shame**, they learn to feel guilty.

If children live with tolerance, they learn to be patient.

If children live with encouragement, they learn confidence.

If children live with praise, they learn to appreciate.

If children live with fairness, they learn justice.

If children live with **security**, they learn to have faith.

If children live with approval, they learn to like themselves.

If children live with acceptance and friendship, they learn to find love in the world.

Children Learn What They Live

Dorothy Law Nolte



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How do I know if my child is ready?



SOCIAL READINESS FOR PRE-PREPS

MAKING FRIENDS

WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE?

Ask yourself; does my child...

- seek out others to play with
- offer play materials and roles to others
- play with others co-operatively
- invite others to play
- exchange ideas, materials and points of view with others
- sustain play with others

WHAT CAN I DO?

Engage in play with your children and their friends.

Model for your child how to take turns and exchange ideas in play. Model how to make friends and sustain play.

Teach your child strategies they can use to join a group of playing children.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION and SOCIAL PROBLEM-SOLVING

WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE?

Ask yourself; does my child...

- respectfully express what they want and are thinking and feeling
- regulate their own emotions in order to solve conflicts
- attend to and listen to peers
- begin to identify solutions to conflict
- begin to identify the consequences of their actions
- make decisions and choices and accept the consequences of their actions



WHAT CAN I DO?

Support your child to think FOR THEMSELVES instead of solving the problem for them.

First, help them identify the emotion they are feeling...

"How did that make you feel?"

Then, support them to come up with a solution to the problem themselves...

"What can you do to solve this problem?"

Afterwards, review with your child whether they chose a successful strategy...

"How did it make you feel to share your dolly with Jo? How did Jo feel?"

HELPING BEHAVIOURS

WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE?

Ask yourself; does my child...

- offer assistance to others
- identify the emotions of others
- put aside what they want in the face of the needs of others
- offer comfort to others
- behave generously to others



WHAT CAN I DO?

Interpret the non-verbal behaviour of others for your child.

"Look at Josie. She is eager for a turn."

Help your child practice reading facial expressions.

"Look at Scott's face. How do you think he is feeling?"

Read books to your child and discuss the character's emotions/thoughts/feelings.

Let your child have practice helping you.

INTERACTING POSITIVELY AND RESPECTFULLY

WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE?

Ask yourself; does my child...

- show respect for other children's belongings and work
- play with others who have differing abilities and characteristics
- begin to develop ideas of, and to practise, co-operation, fairness and justice



WHAT CAN I DO?

Expose your child to music, art forms and games/toys from a variety of cultures.

Help your child to notice the positive role of different children in a group activity.

"Roy is tall and he can reach the pieces on the top. Meika's hands fit in the small holes where the marbles rolled."

Admire how individuals make different contributions to a group effort, so your child can learn how different people can work and play together respectfully.

CO-OPERATING

WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE?

Ask yourself; does my child...

- exchange ideas and materials during play
- follow simple rules
- invite others to join them in play
- listen and respond appropriately when others speak
- engage in group decision making
- accept that other children may make different choices to them
- respect the decision of a judge/umpire in a game



WHAT CAN I DO?

Exchange ideas with children during play and model for them how to exchange ideas with their friends. *"You finished the puzzle. You could do this hard one next. Jenny's good at puzzles. Do you think you could ask her to help you. What you do think?"*

Model listening and speaking respectfully to your child and others.

Engage your child in family decision making (where appropriate), especially at the discussion phase.

Play games with rules and model how to be a good sport.

EMPATHY

WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE?

Ask yourself; does my child...

- share emotions, communicate and express feelings with adults and peers
- share their experiences with a small group
- see the world from another's perspective
- identify with others
- know when something is unfair for another child



WHAT CAN I DO?

When your child is the aggressor, act to stop the behaviour and help your child to see the other's child's perspective. Discuss how the other child may be feeling. Help your child to come up with respectful, non-violent strategies for if same situation re-occurs.

When your child is hurt by another, intervene respectfully and speak calmly. Talk to the other child in a way that helps them think about how your child may be feeling.

Discuss with your child when things are fair/unfair and why.

Talk openly about your own feelings - give a name to emotions; sad, excited, angry etc.

EMOTIONAL READINESS FOR PRE-PREPS

SELF CONCEPT AND IDENTITY

WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE?

Ask yourself; does my child...

- identify what they can do and what they have yet to learn
- take responsibility for him/her self (eg. during dressing and eating routines and in daily living)
- see her/him self as competent and capable
- express joy in his/her characteristics and identity
- express curiosity and react sensitively to difference
- enjoy family stories and celebrations
- make connections between our family and society (noticing similarities and differences)
- express her/his own choices



WHAT CAN I DO?

Treat your children as though they are competent. Set up routines where your child is expected to help in the home.

Establish routines of independence for your child (teach them to, and then expect them to dress themselves, carry their own bag etc).

Discuss your own and your child's past successes. Talk about mistakes and failures (your own and your child's) in a POSITIVE way. Talk about how failures and mistakes are opportunities to learn and grow.

Encourage your child to take appropriate risks. Ensure your child has opportunities to retell family stories.

Be a curious adult.

TALK, TALK, TALK with your child about all kinds of things.

SELF ESTEEM

WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE?

Ask yourself; does my child...

- talk about her/him self in positive terms
- talk about him/her self as an important and valued member of the family (or of the kindy/day-care group)
- work towards goals (ie rewards charts) and 'stick at it'
- act responsibly towards others
- speak about others in positive terms



WHAT CAN I DO?

Talk about your child and others positively. Help your child work towards goals (this helps them learn to delay gratification). Praise your child specifically for their effort. Avoid 'platitudes' ("What a good boy!") as your child can't relate that to their own effort and agency. Try saying, "I really liked how hard you worked to put that Lego together. I could see you were getting frustrated, but you really persisted. How does that make you feel?" Instead of saying, "I'm proud of you." when your child does something amazing, ask your child, "Are you proud of yourself? Why?" This way your child can learn and practice what they need to do to be successful in the world.

EXPRESSING EMOTIONS

WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE?

Ask yourself; does my child...

- identify different emotions and talk about them
- increase or decrease emotional energy in keeping with the situation (ie. Your child gets a fright, but you hug them and they calm themselves down. Your child is angry because they have to leave a favourite place, but you explain that you can come back another time and they calm themselves down.)
- express negative emotions in ways that do not harm others

WHAT CAN I DO?

Read books with your child that provide a platform to discuss different emotions and how to appropriately handle them. When responding to your child's negative emotions, address self-regulation first. Teach your child strategies to bring down their emotional energy. To address the expression of negative emotions you may say, *"When I'm frustrated, I go for a walk and talk to myself about my problem. I come back to my work later."*



REGULATING ATTENTION, EMOTIONS, BEHAVIOUR

WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE?

Ask yourself; does my child...

- express emotions appropriately
- focus their attention
- avoid distraction
- independently return their attention to the task after a distraction
- delay gratification
- persist (even when frustrated)
- use language to communicate needs and regulate emotions
- begin to gain control of their behaviour
- cope with challenges and disappointments
- use effective strategies for self-calming



WHAT CAN I DO?

Help your child use words to express how they are feeling. "I see by your face that you are getting frustrated."

Explain emotions. "Frustrated is how you feel when things don't work out the way you want them to."

Teach your child strategies for dealing with emotions. "When I'm frustrated, sometimes I like to ask another person to help me."

Help your child re-focus their attention when they are distracted.

Teach your child to delay gratification and put in place strategies that help them gain control of their behaviour. "First you need to get 10 stickers on your helper chart before you get your reward."

Reward your child's efforts towards attention, persistence, good behaviour so they know when they are on the right track.

"I see you are really trying to use deep breaths to calm yourself down. Would you like me to help you?"

Limit screen time.

Monitor how you deal with your child's negative emotions and behaviour. It is NOT helpful for your child to always get what they want.

Specifically teach strategies for self-calming. "I can see by how you are shouting that you are very angry right now. Let's do some milkshake breathing and then we can talk about what went wrong."

POSITIVE ATTITUDES TOWARDS LEARNING

WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE?

Ask yourself; does my child...

- persevere when faced with challenging or new tasks
- cope with defeats, mistakes and errors
- ask for and accept help when needed
- accept challenges and take risks when learning
- express satisfaction and joy when accomplishing tasks



WHAT CAN I DO?

Model curiosity, creative thinking and problem solving. *"I wonder what would hold these large boxes together."*

Be a partner to your child when persistence is required.

Be excited about learning and share children's joy in their discoveries.

Provide support for your child when they are taking on challenges and risks.

Encourage your child to persist with tasks when mastering a new skill.

Talk about how mistakes are an important part of learning.

Reward effort more than achievement.

Do the High-5!

