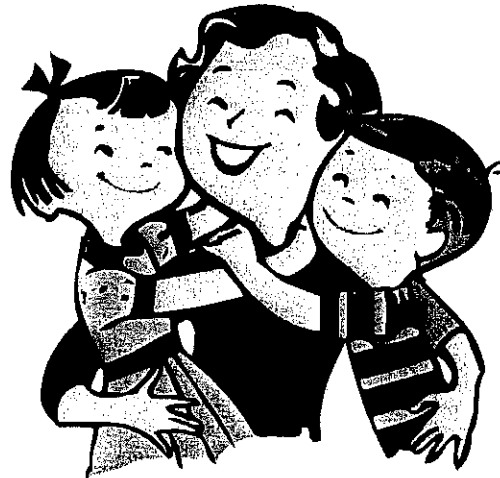


## What Can A Parent Do to Help?



1. **Encourage independence and responsibility.** Let your child help choose his/her own clothes, dress him/herself, keep track of toys and shoes, open snack packages, get him/herself in the car and buckled up.
2. **Be organized.** Get a backpack. Have a standard place that things are put to go to school the next day. Use a monthly calendar to keep track of library day, snack day, when homework is due, etc.
3. **Encourage the use of small motor skills.** Help your child learn to copy his/her name from a name tag. Teach them to use safety scissors to cut. Practice tying shoes and fastening buttons and snaps.
4. **Start developing academic skills.** Practice counting from one to thirty. Start practicing alphabet letters. (Start with just a few letters). Identify words that rhyme.
5. **Attend the fall orientation conference.** Teachers cover important emergency information as well as giving you name tags, snack calendars, book orders and milk money envelopes.
6. **Be supportive.** Stay in contact with your child's teacher. If you have a concern, send a note, make a phone call or request a conference. Research shows that children whose parents are involved with the school are more successful in school.

# KINDERGARTEN



A few years ago, *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten* (Robert Fulghum) appeared on the best-seller list. While this title may not ring true for everyone, kindergarten is a

year packed with "firsts." Here are some points to ponder as your child goes through this important year.

**K**indergarten is a special year and a new adventure. Share happy memories from your early school experiences. *Example:* "I was nervous at first, but then I made lots of new friends."

**I**ndependence should be encouraged. Teach your child how to do things for himself, for example, getting dressed, brushing teeth, and completely handling toileting. *Tip:* Allow plenty of time!

**N**ormally, children enjoy kindergarten. There may be days, though, when your child doesn't. Help her realize that although some days may be rough, things will get better.

**D**iscipline starts at home. Have a few simple rules that you enforce. *Examples:* "Clean up before starting something new," and, "No hitting allowed." Your child will have an easier time with school rules.

**E**very day show an interest in what your child did at school. Share something about your day and ask about his. It's so important to be part of your child's education.

**R**ead to your child whenever you can. It's a great way to motivate him to want to learn to read. Read everything from billboards and labels to poems and storybooks.

**G**ive your child responsibilities—feeding the dog, helping with dishes, dusting the furniture. She will gain confidence and learn that her contributions are important.

**A**rrange for a classmate to visit now and then. When possible, try to help out at school. Your child will feel more comfortable when there's a strong connection between home and school.

**R**aise your child to show respect to you and others. If you're not satisfied with his behavior, try to change it now. When your child accepts the teacher's authority, he will learn more.

**T**uck your child in bed every night. Make the moments special by reading a book and talking. Hug your child and say, "I love you." If you can't be home, leave a taped message or call.

**E**ncourage your child to learn her full name, phone number, her teacher's name, and her bus number. She'll feel more self-assured, better prepared, and safer.

**N**ever underestimate the importance of kindergarten. Your child is not only learning the 3Rs but also how to get along with others, take turns, solve problems peacefully, and much more.



# Quality Education...

Our commitment... Our challenge

Hollidaysburg Area Education Association PSEA-NEA

## Exciting times are coming as your child enters kindergarten

How exciting! For both you and your child, entering kindergarten and beginning a successful school career is a major event filled with expectations of busy school years that will be both productive and happy.

As parents, this beginning is also a major change for you. Now is the time to shift part of the attention you give your child to this new environment—to the process of learning, the wonderful new discoveries, the friends to be made, the experiences to be shared. Your child will certainly want and need your continual involvement and interest and encouragement, as she or he begins this adventure.

Success in this first year will carry through the next several years. A secure foundation is the best insurer of success in the school years to come.

### Know the right timing for your child

With all the goodwill in the world on the part of both parents and teachers, success cannot happen if the child is not ready. Kindergarten is not mandated in the School Code of this Commonwealth. Where programs exist, Pennsylvania law allows school districts to establish minimum age requirements as long as they don't start before age four. The law does not compel school attendance until children are eight years old. You should check with school officials to find out what the minimum ages are for both kindergarten and first grade. Readiness of the child becomes all-important in the decision making.

Readiness is not dependent on degree of intelligence; it is not "good" or "bad." Children simply

grow on differing time schedules and those differences can be important to consider—not to judge, but to consider. Pushing a child too soon can undermine his or her entire academic career. It can also seriously jeopardize social development if the child is continually attempting to "keep up"—and meeting with continuous failure.

You know your child. Trust your own knowledge; don't let opinions of your neighbors and friends confuse your own instincts. Your child is not competing.

A major help as you make that decision will be your local school personnel—either the kindergarten teacher or the principal. They will be able to help you and will be happy to do so. Visit a kindergarten class, if possible. Ask what will be expected, what skills are needed, what are the advantages and disadvantages of entering now or later.

You may never make a more important decision for that very special child of yours than when to start him or her in school. Please make it carefully.

### Prepare and reinforce

There are many daily activities that you can use to prepare your child for school as well as to reinforce what she or he will learn there.

A trip to the grocery store is an ideal time to point out colors, shapes, and sizes. Have your child help sort the laundry; it can be a fun way of getting a chore done while spending time with your child and teaching him or her some basic skills such as matching and categorizing. Preparing a meal together is another way of being with your child while teaching basic skills.

Also—be sure to take time out of your busy schedule to read with your child!

*Your local teachers suggest...*

## Belief in children is important

In order to learn, children must believe that they can learn. Much of this attitude is influenced by the work they do in school and the

expectations and feedback they receive from teachers and other students.

You as a parent, however, are the most important adult in your child's life.

Whatever you say or do regarding his or her ability to learn will have a major impact on the child's self-concept as an effective learner.

Of course, children learn at varying speeds, but they do continue to learn unless they have stopped believing in themselves. You can help to maintain your child's positive self-regard as an able learner by realistically showing faith in him or her.

If difficulties in school learning arise, help your child to see those as problems that can be solved. Consult with the teacher to get a clearer perspective and cooperatively discuss ways in which you can assist at home. In all instances, keep faith in your child as a learner without undue pressure or threat.

## Let's work together for your very special child

The best way to give your child a rich and rewarding year in kindergarten is the same way we recommend throughout his or her school career; parents and school staff working together. Please stay involved.

Taking time every day to share your child's experiences will pay big dividends. It will help your child learn more when you are genuinely interested in his or her new discoveries. Ask about school activities, and listen to the answers.

But all your participation needn't be through your child's

experiences. Talk to the kindergarten teacher about becoming involved firsthand. Perhaps there are activities where parents are needed. Join the parents' group if one exists. If there is not a PTA or PTO, find out how to start one.

If there is ever anything you don't understand, your child's teacher is perhaps your best source of information. But don't wait until you have questions before you get to know the teacher. We care very much about your child, just as you do. We have a mission in common—the success of your child.

## Prepare for the first day

With your child registered and the paperwork completed, how do you prepare your child—and yourself—for the eventful first day?

A few suggestions:

Start talking with your child about school, about how much fun it will be to learn and to meet all the other youngsters. Discuss learning as something to be enjoyed.

Prepare your child for what to expect; discuss the school day. Will there be a bus ride? Explain the rules to be followed. Will there be naps? How about snacks?

Visit the kindergarten classroom, if possible, and meet the teacher. Show your child the playground and the restrooms in addition to the classroom.

And read to your child about school. Find stories that include school settings. Play games about school. And through play, teach your child how to get ready for school on time.

Your child's teacher will be very adept at helping your child adjust. But, as always, your cooperation and involvement are needed. We urge you to keep in touch with your child's teacher and to contact us whenever you have questions.



Hollidaysburg Area Education Association  
school professionals who provide quality education

# **IU-8 SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES PRESCHOOL DIVISION**

## **PARENTS:**

**DO YOU KNOW THE EARLY WARNING SIGNS OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS.....AND WHERE TO LOOK FOR HELP?**

### **WHO CAN HELP?**

Appalachia Intermediate Unit 8 provides **FREE** educational services for children with special needs.

The Preschool Program offers:

- Developmental evaluation to determine a child's needs
- Referral to appropriate programs and services
- Individual Education Programs
- Instruction in the home
- Classroom instruction
- Speech Therapy
- Parent support and education
- Physical Therapy/Occupational Therapy
- Vision/Hearing Support
- Transportation

**ALL INFORMATION IS KEPT STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL**

If your child...

Lives in Bedford, Blair, Cambria, or Somerset County

Is 3 to 5 years old (not yet eligible for Kindergarten in district of residence)

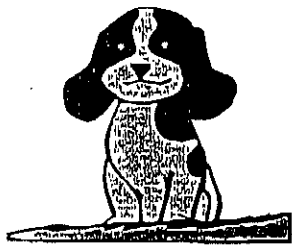
Has physical handicaps or problems seeing, talking, playing, thinking, hearing, or moving.

## **CONTACT**

**IU-8 PRESCHOOL PROGRAM**

**4500 SIXTH AVENUE, ALTOONA, PA 16602**

**(814) 940-0223 OR 1-800-228-7900**



## EARLY WARNING SIGNS

The following **EARLY WARNING SIGNS** are some of the more common indications that a problem may exist. If you suspect that your child may have special needs, seek help immediately. Don't wait until he or she enters school before you begin to deal with the problem.

### SEEING – If your child....

- \*Is often unable to locate and pick up small objects within reach
- \*Frequently rubs his/her eyes or complains that the eyes hurt
- \*Has reddened, watering or encrusted eyelids
- \*Holds his/her head in a strained or awkward position when trying to look at a person or object

### MOVING – If your child....

- \*Cannot sit up without support by age 1
- \*Cannot walk without help by age 2
- \*Does not walk up and down steps by age 3
- \*Is unable to balance on one foot for a short time by age 4
- \*Cannot throw a ball overhand and catch a large ball bounced to him/her by age 5

### PLAYING – If your child....

- \*Does not play games such as peek-a-boo, patty-cake or wave bye-bye by age 1
- \*Does not imitate parents doing household chores by age 2 – 3
- \*Does not enjoy playing alone with toys, sand, etc. by age 3
- \*Does not play group games such as hide-and-seek or tag with other children by age 4
- \*Does not share and take turns by age 5

### THINKING – If your child....

- \*Does not react to his/her name when called by age 1
- \*Is unable to identify the hair, eyes, ears, nose and mouth by pointing to them by age 2
- \*Does not understand simple stories told or read by age 3
- \*Does not give reasonable answers to questions by age 4
- \*Does not understand the meaning of the words "today", "tomorrow" by age 5

### TALKING – If your child....

- \*Cannot say "mama" or "dada" by age 1
- \*Cannot say the names of a few toys and people by age 2
- \*Cannot repeat common rhymes or TV jingles by age 3
- \*Is not understood by people outside the family by age 5

### HEARING – If your child....

- \*Does not turn to face the source of strange sounds or voices by 6 months of age
- \*Has frequent earaches or running ears
- \*Talks in a very loud or very soft voice
- \*Does not respond when you call from another room
- \*Turns the same ear toward sounds he/she wants to hear

