



# Supporting Continual Learning and Development in the Early Years

The early childhood years are just as important for children with disabilities and developmental delays as they are for all children. All of your child's future development is based on the critical learning patterns developed during this period.

School readiness activities can guide you toward better understanding the types of skills a young child should be learning. It is important to remember every child will develop at a different pace. A child with a disability may enter a formal school setting sooner than a child without a disability and the skills that a child with a disability needs to learn will be individualized based on individual needs.

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## School Readiness:

- can be achieved through at-home activities.
- can be achieved through activities that focus on phonological awareness, language, vocabulary, mathematics, science, and history/social science.
- also refers to children being prepared physically, through a focus on small and large motor development.
- includes a focus on social development, such as self-regulation, communication skills, interacting with others, problem-solving, and recognizing and expressing emotions.

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## Making the Transition from Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) to Kindergarten

Special education and related services delivered to preschool-aged children ages two through five (ECSE) provide the educational foundation for students as they transition to kindergarten. The transition to kindergarten will present changes for you and your child, so it is important to prepare for this milestone.

### Things to consider:

- The nature of the program, location, length of the school day, and staff may change.
- Preschool children transition into kindergarten more successfully when their schools and families prepare together.
- By coordinating transition efforts, preschool, and elementary programs can help children maintain and maximize the gains they made in preschool.
- The transition to kindergarten is a process and not a "one size fits all" formula.
- The IEP Team may provide transition activities to aid in the successful transition to kindergarten.
- Discuss your transition concerns with the IEP Team and your child's teacher.
- Share information about your child's strengths and interests during IEP meetings.
- Plan to get to know your child's new teacher.