



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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NEW SET OF SCHOOL PREPAREDNESS TIPS FOR PARENTS

As part of a public awareness strategy in conjunction with its Countdown to Kindergarten initiative, First Steps today released the second set of weekly school readiness tips for parents. The tips can also be found on the First Steps website at www.scfirststeps.org/press.htm. This week's tips inform parents what they and their children should know before school starts.

What Children Need to Know Before Starting Kindergarten

- Know their name, address and phone number.
- Be able to tie their shoes and get their coats and boots on and off.
- Be able to use the bathroom and wash their hands.
- Have experiences cooperating with other children; wait their turn, work with others, share supplies, etc.
- Use language appropriately and extensively.
- Have a healthy feeling of self-worth and positive feelings of self and of others (can-do attitude).
- Have good health and good nutrition habits.
- Be a good listener.

Source: South Carolina Department of Education, www.myscschools.com, SC First Steps to School Readiness, 2004

What Parents Should Know Before Their Child Starts Kindergarten

- When to register for kindergarten.
- What registration forms to fill out.
- Their child's kindergarten teacher's name (once assigned).
- What immunizations are required.
- A description of the kindergarten program.
- The kindergarten schedule and a daily schedule.
- Transportation procedures.
- Food service arrangements.
- Ways to become more involved in the child's education and the school.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, www.ed.gov

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South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness ('First Steps') is a comprehensive, results-oriented statewide education initiative to help prepare children to reach school healthy and ready to succeed. Public and private support are combined through county partnerships to enable individual communities to address the unmet needs of young children and their families. First Steps' Countdown to Kindergarten is designed to leverage local resources to aid successful transitions of SC's most at-risk children into kindergarten, and to target early parent involvement and increased community awareness of the importance of school readiness. Nearly 1,300 children and their families will participate in this year's Countdown program. Over 120 certified kindergarten teachers in 34 counties are currently conducting a series of eight visits to each participating family's home to prepare the child for starting school and open the relationship with the child's family.

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