



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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NEW SET OF SCHOOL PREPAREDNESS TIPS FOR PARENTS
This week's tips detail the top 10 signs of a good kindergarten classroom.

First Steps today released its next 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.

Top 10 Signs of a Good Kindergarten Classroom

Kindergarten "curriculum" includes such events as snack time, recess, and individual and group activities in addition to those activities we think of as traditionally educational. Good classrooms encourage the growth of children's self-esteem, their cultural identities, their independence and their individual strengths. Here are 10 signs of a good kindergarten classroom:

1. Children are playing and working with materials or other children, not aimlessly wandering or sitting quietly for long periods of time.
2. Children have access to various activities throughout the day, such as block building, pretend play, art materials, legos, and puzzles. Children are not all doing the same things at the same time.
3. Teachers work with individual children, small groups, and the whole group at different times during the day. They do not spend time only with the entire group.
4. The classroom is decorated with children's original artwork, their own writing and dictated stories.
5. Children learn numbers and the alphabet in the context of their everyday experiences.
6. Children work on projects and have long periods of time (at least one hour) to play and explore.
7. Children have an opportunity to play outside every day that weather permits.
8. Teachers read books to children throughout the day, not just at group story time.
9. Since children learn differently, curriculum is adapted for those who are ahead as well as those who need additional help.
10. Children and their parents look forward to school. Classrooms and curriculum will vary, but all good kindergarten classrooms will focus on the development of the child as a whole.

Source: National Association for the Education of Young Children

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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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