



Why is Quality Child Care Important for School Readiness?

What is Quality Child Care?

There are some important things to look for that can help determine if a child care center or an in-home setting is a safe, nurturing, educational place for children. Here are some examples of important quality indicators:

- ✓ The setting has low child to teacher ratios (number of children for every one adult).
- ✓ The setting has small group sizes (number of children in each room, regardless of the ratio).
- ✓ There is low turnover among staff and children have consistency in their caregivers.
- ✓ There is a written curriculum based upon the ages and interests of each child.
- ✓ Caregivers have appropriate expectations of children's abilities and guidance techniques that foster positive behavior in children.
- ✓ Caregivers are trained in first aid, CPR, communicable disease and SIDS.
- ✓ Caregivers have formal education as well as ongoing training and mentoring in child development.
- ✓ The setting has an emergency preparedness plan and regularly holds drills.
- ✓ There are health and safety policies and procedures (e.g., storing of toxic substances, diapering, hand washing) to ensure the environment is free of health & safety hazards.

What is School Readiness?

School readiness is difficult to define. It is more than knowing your ABCs or being able to count to 20. Children's readiness can be assessed across 3 general areas:

- ◆ **Physical Well-Being and Motor Development:** Children will have developed fine motor skills (cutting, dressing self), gross motor skills (running, jumping), and will be well-rested and well-nourished.
- ◆ **Social and Emotional Development:** Children will be able to have positive interactions with others and be able to self-regulate their behavior as well as understand and express their feelings. They will also be able to solve conflicts, empathize with others and have the ability to take turns and share.
- ◆ **Cognitive and Language Development:** Children will be able to observe, ask questions, and solve problems based on what they see and hear. They will have an enthusiastic and curious approach to new activities. Children will also be able to communicate with others and understand that there is a connection between letters and sounds.



What is the link between Quality Child Care and School Readiness?

There is a wealth of research and data that connect high-quality early childhood experiences to children's school readiness and later life success (see related research below). Research findings include:

Benefits in Kindergarten & Elementary School	Benefits in Middle & High School	Benefits in Adulthood
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved school readiness skills • Improved math and language ability • Fewer cognitive and social issues • Fewer behavior issues • Less likely to be in special education • Less likely to repeat a grade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less likely to enter juvenile detention programs • More likely to graduate from high school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More likely to be in a high-skilled job or higher education at age 21 • Less likely to commit a crime or felony • Less likely to rely on social assistance programs (e.g., TANF, food stamps, housing)

Related Research

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