

Preschool Readiness

Purpose: This document provides parents/caregivers with an understanding of general skills that are typically targeted in a comprehensive ABA program to increase a child's success in a preschool/ community/group setting. Typically, children attending preschool are aged 2 to 5 years old.

Early Intervention Comprehensive Programs: Opya's early intervention comprehensive programs typically include a high number of therapy hours in which multiple developmental areas such as communication, daily living skills, socialization, etc. are targeted. This approach is supported by research to show the largest improvements in children and is ultimately focused on increasing the rate of learning during this crucial time when a child's brain is the most elastic, i.e., when the child is most ready to learn and adopt / acquire new ideas and skills. This approach has also been shown to have the best outcomes in preparing a child to be successful in the preschool setting.

Skills for Your Child to Acquire Before Entering the Preschool Setting:

Note: This list is not exhaustive. Your BCBA can provide individualized feedback on needed goals.

Cognitive

- Copies actions of others
- Follows 1 and 2 step instructions
- Pays attention for 5 minutes
- Completes identical inset puzzles, shape sorters, ring stackers
- Looks at a picture book for 5 minutes
- Counts items one by one, up to 5

Communication/Language

- Asks for items using 1 to 2 words
- Points to items of interest and makes choices
- Responds to their name when called by an adult
- Uses over 50 words
- Talks about everyday experiences
- Uses words like: I, me, doggie run, where's mommy
- Language is intelligible to most people

Social/Emotional

- Shares interest by engaging in joint attention and pointing to show things to others
- Follows simple routines, e.g., clean up time
- Separates easily from parents and caregivers or calms down within 10 minutes
- Notices other children; tries to join them
- Assists with grooming routines
- Follows rules and routines

Motor/Physical

- Assists with hand washing
- Assists with dressing and undressing
- Self feeds finger foods
- Carries toys and items to different locations
- Kicks a ball
- Strings items together

Skills/Behaviors to REDUCE Before Your Child Enters a Group Setting:

Note: This list is not exhaustive. Your BCBA can provide individualized feedback on needed goals.

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|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Toileting accidents | <input type="checkbox"/> Lengthy tantrums, e.g., increasing coping strategies to common situations like waiting, being told “no” |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Food refusals | <input type="checkbox"/> Tearing, breaking, throwing, swiping items off of surfaces |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leaving the play or work area | <input type="checkbox"/> Dropping to the floor and refusing to transition |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attempting to leave the community setting or leave the home | <input type="checkbox"/> Aggression |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of responsiveness or refusals to complete safety instructions (e.g., hold hands, stop, come here, wait) | <input type="checkbox"/> Resistance to transitions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inappropriately touching other children, e.g., touching someone’s hair, backpack, clothing | <input type="checkbox"/> Disruptive behaviors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Invading personal space of others, e.g., sitting too close to a peer, not moving away when asked | |

What does READY for preschool look like?

My child can complete the following skills most of the time:

- Follows 1-2 step directions
- Feeds themselves finger foods and drinks from a variety of cups
- Transitions between activities when instructed
- Is toilet trained
- Dresses self, washes hands
- Separates from caregiver or calms within 10 min
- Copies the actions of others
- Shows interest in looking at books and being read to
- Engages in play with 3-5 play sets for a few minutes
- Remains seated and attends to an activity for 15 minutes
- Tolerates other people (peers/adults) in their proximity and accepts teaching prompts
- Does not engage in high rates of challenging behaviors (e.g., refusals, tantrums, aggression, property destruction, elopement)
- Follows a bedtime routine and does not require a daily nap (or is fading naptime)

Other Considerations:

- What is the level of intrusiveness of the learning environment, e.g., 1:1, small group, large group, level of ABA support?
- Will we participate in the offered Individualized Education Program (IEP) by our local school district or consider an alternative?
- If there is a location identified, are they prepared to support the needs of my child and will they allow outside providers to provide care?
- Does my child have the skills to learn in a group setting or would they benefit from continued 1:1 instruction?
- How do I allocate my child's time to best meet their developmental goals?
- What other items should be considered?
 - Family dynamics
 - Cultural considerations
 - Environmental arrangements, e.g., access to learning materials, toys, organization and space

CaregiversResources:

- **Resource Centers** - Provide support networks, information, and resources for families raising or living with individuals with disabilities
 - [Parents Helping Parents](#) (Santa Clara County)
 - [Family Resource Center](#) (San Mateo County)
 - [Help Me Group](#) (Los Angeles County)
 - [Help Me Grow](#) (Orange County)
 - [Family Support Resources | UC Davis MIND Institute](#) (Sacramento)
 - [Family Resource Network](#) (Central Valley)
- **Regional Centers / Early Start Programs** - Available statewide and provide a variety of resources and services, e.g., Early Intervention, Speech Therapy, and Occupational Therapy, for infants and toddlers with, or at risk, for developmental disabilities/delays
 - [Regional Center Listings](#)

Citations:

- [CDC Developmental Milestones](#)
- [Greg Hanley: Preschool Life Skills Curriculum](#)
- [School Readiness | Pediatrics](#)
- [Social Development in Preschoolers](#)