

Benefits of starting Kindergarten

Kindergarten programs are designed to improve your child's development in the following key areas:

- social skills, like how to play with other children in a calm, sharing and rewarding way
- self-awareness and respect for others
- emotional skills, for example understanding their feelings
- language, literacy and numeracy skills, such as reading stories and counting objects
- a joy for learning and group activities, such as talking, drawing and making things together with other children their own age
- ability to make new friends
- exposure to new ideas and concepts.
- Kindergarten also provides families with access to:
 - support and assistance for children with special needs
 - resources and links to community support services

Deferment options

Some children benefit from delaying entry for a year, while gaining more confidence through playgroup, childcare, Family Day Care or informal parent groups, kinder gym and music/movement programs.

Benefits of deferment

- extra time to mature and develop skills
- increased confidence in social situations
- greater control of their body
- better able to cope with peer conflict and frustration
- increased ability to follow instruction and direction

For further information please contact
The Preschool Field Officer program
Phone (03) 9932 1000

If you require further information visit these websites

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/parents/transition/Pages/default.aspx>

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/parents/kindergarten/Pages/enrolling.aspx>

http://raisingchildren.net.au/articles/starting_preschool.html

<http://sydney.edu.au/news/84.html?newsstoryid=3197>

<http://earlylife.com.au/info/sites/default/files/School%20Readiness.pdf>

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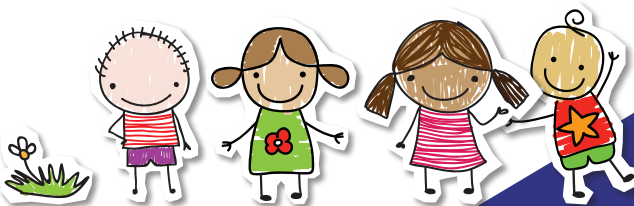
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**HOBSONS BAY
LANGUAGE LINE**

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INTERPRETER SERVICE FOR ALL LANGUAGES
Your Council in your language



READY FOR KINDERGARTEN?



**HOBSONS
BAY CITY
COUNCIL**



Why go to Kindergarten?

Kindergarten is an essential year for children to assist in a smooth transition to school. It is the first step towards more formal learning and sometimes the first experience of regular time away from the security of home. It is a year when children need to have many affirming experiences with a group of children their own age.



Factors to consider

When to send your child to kindergarten is a very important decision. In recent years many parents have considered delaying their child's entry to four year old kindergarten. Regardless of whether your child is a boy or girl, you need to carefully consider about sending your child to kindergarten if they were born between December and April.

It is important to know that if your child attends Kindergarten, a second year of four year old kindergarten is not automatically granted even if you feel that your child needs one. To be eligible for a second year, a child must be assessed by the kindergarten teacher and a full second year assessment process should be carried out. It is recommended that another professional including a Preschool Field Officer, Early Childhood Intervention Service worker or Maternal Child Health nurse contributes information and advice.

The child must be considered to have developmental delays or concerns in at least two developmental areas and that kindergarten is the best environment for your child's development.



Ready for Kindergarten?

There are many factors to consider when deciding if your child is ready for kindergarten. These include:

- Can your child separate from you for a period of time long enough to attend the kindergarten sessions?
- Can your child generally be understood when he/she speaks?
- Can your child initiate play or activities for him/herself?
- Can your child take responsibility for his/her belongings?
- Will your child speak up when he/she needs help?
- Is your child able to socialise with other children?

The group sizes of the kindergarten can be up to 33 children. The children will be expected to wait for turns, share materials and concentrate for a reasonable length of time. There will be times when they will have to wait to get attention from staff and also time spent sitting at group activities playing games, singing, listening to stories and having discussions.

Some children benefit from allowing them more time to learn from life's experiences before entering more formal learning settings.

Research from University of Sydney has also shown that children who are ready for kindergarten developmentally benefit from starting school with children of the same age. Children markedly older in their year group tend to be less motivated in high school and academically behind children who are age appropriate.

Making your decision



To help you make a decision about kindergarten readiness it may be helpful to make a time to visit a kindergarten to see how the program operates, what the expectations of the children are and to see how the children learn in the group. This may also provide an opportunity to discuss your concerns with the teacher. Many kindergartens also have an orientation day in December for children who are enrolled to attend the following year.

There are a range of things you can do to prepare your child for kindergarten:

- talking to your child about what to expect
- reading to your child every day
- encouraging your child to be independent by giving them time by themselves
- packing a change of clothes for your child and labelling all belongings
- encouraging your child to dress themselves, so they can manage tasks like taking their jumper on and off
- having practice runs taking your child to the kindergarten before their first day
- coming up with a goodbye ritual. At first you may want to stay to make sure your child feels secure, but once they settle in, a short goodbye encourages independence
- keeping kindergarten staff informed of changes in your child's life that might affect their experiences at kindergarten

