

With Kindergarten registration occurring across the county and the state, many parents and schools are preparing children to start school in the fall. Are our children ready to go to school?

The Clinton County Early Care and Education Initiative and Penn State Cooperative Extension surveyed Kindergarten and pre-school teachers and parents of pre-scholars enrolled in licensed pre-school to assess school readiness and look for suggestions to improve existing school transition practices.

What Kindergarten teachers said:

The top 3 strengths of they saw in their students for 2007-2008 are: Physical well be, memory and self care skills.

The top 3 challenges or difficulties were: attentiveness, fine motor development and number concepts.

The top reasons why children in our community may not reach kindergarten prepared to experience success in school:

- Families do not have adequate support and training in parenting skills and child development
- Families do not understand the importance of parental/caretaker involvement in the child's education
- Children are not receiving early identification of developmental delays or the necessary interventions, supports or services.
- Families have difficulty providing a health environment for their child due to overwhelming life stresses.

Pre-school teachers answers the same as the kindergarten teachers but also indicated that some employers do not support parents to be involved in their child's development (unable to leave work for meetings with teacher or sick children).

Currently, there are very limited transition activities for children entering kindergarten, parents, Kindergarten and pre-school teachers were asked a series of questions to uncover what type of transition activities they would like to see occur in our community.

Parents, Kindergarten and Pre-school teachers indicated the below would be very beneficial or beneficial to improve transition into Kindergarten:

- Parents and pre-schoolers observing a Kindergarten class
- Pre-Kindergarten meeting s prior to the start of school
- The sharing of written records of the child's past experiences before the start of school
- A meeting with teacher prior to the start of Kindergarten

- Regular meetings among school, early childhood, pre-school staff in the community
- Visit by the Kindergarten teacher prior to the start of school

There are many things that can be done in our community to make a smooth transition for pre-schoolers into the Kindergarten setting. School transition, readiness and success takes the entire community working together.

For additional information on school readiness or this survey, please contact Laurie Welch at 570-726-0022 or [law27@psu.edu](mailto:law27@psu.edu).