

School Readiness

SMARTIE PANTS EARLY
LEARNING AND
DEVELOPMENT

CHILD CARE &
KINDERGARTEN
DIAMOND CREEK
ABN: 73104223565

"The beginning of something is always very important. Especially when it's young and needs time to grow." (Plato)

Starting school is an important milestone in all children's early learning and development and it is important to ensure that we provide them with the best opportunity to thrive in an environment which they will be spending the next 13 years of their life.

Much research has been conducted into the skills which help a child, not to just survive the schooling process but flourish and reach their full potential and the findings often surprise parents. It has been shown that early development of academic literacy such as reading, writing and mathematics are of **less importance** than development of a child's social, emotional and independence skills. Instead, an assessment of a child's readiness should take into greater consideration skills which create the optimal basis for children to function and constructively learn at school. Children need to be able to initiate, problem solve, communicate effectively, deal with conflict, form friendships, relate easily with teachers, adapt to different class-

rooms and teaching styles, to have tolerance and to take some responsibility for their own belongings, actions and behaviours. Without these skills, effective learning is significantly impeded.

Some good examples of social and emotional maturity, described by Kathy Walker, a highly respected researcher and consultant, are:

- Being able to separate from parent/caregiver when dropped off at the early childhood program without distress
- Taking responsibility at a basic level for own possessions, like hanging smock up after a painting
- Dealing at a rudimentary

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level with conflict, not hitting out or hurting others when conflict or frustration occurs

- Being able to talk with and respond to teacher
- Showing an interest in peers although not necessarily a true friendship
- Following a few directions at a time without being distracted by others
- Completing a task without needing lots of prompting from teacher



Young child providing comfort to each other

- Making some decisions and initiating own play and work at the early childhood program without always following the lead of others or needing lots of prompting from teachers

As parents, it is important that you consider carefully all these aspects and remember that there is good evidence to show that delaying a child's start can assist them succeed during this very important stage in their learning and development.

Source:

Waker, K. (2007) *School Readiness*, Kidlife retrieved 1/10/2007 http://www.kidslife.com.au/article.asp?ContentID=school_readiness

'Starting School' (n.d.) Parenting and Child Health website retrieved 1/10/2007 from <http://www.cyh.com/SubDefault.aspx?p=98>