

Parent Resource Guide

For Aurora Area Families



Fox Valley United Way

Early Childhood Collaboration



Strong, Prepared And Ready for Kindergarten

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www.sparkaurora.org

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Milestones and Developmental Screenings

All children develop in unique ways and at different rates. Developmental screenings are a fun and comfortable way to learn how a child is developing, and to address developmental questions parents and caregivers may have. Call your local school district to learn more about developmental screenings in your area or **DayOnePact**, our local Child and Family Connections, 1551 E. Fabian Pkwy, Geneva, IL 60134, 630.879.2277, www.dayonepact.org

Below are just some of the things you should look for as your child grows. Use this as a guide, and if you have any concerns, talk with your child's doctor and get connected with your community's early childhood intervention system.

At 6 months, many children



- respond to own name
- respond to other people's emotions and often seem happy copy sounds
- like to play with others, especially parents

At 1 year (12 months), many children



- use simple gestures, like shaking head "no" or waving "bye-bye" say "mama" and "dada" and exclamations like "uh-oh!"
- copy gestures
- respond to simple spoken requests

At 1 ½ years (18 months), many children



- play simple pretend, such as feeding a doll
- point to show others something interesting
- show a full range of emotions, such as happy, sad, angry say several single words

At 2 years (24 months), many children



- say sentences with 2 to 3 words
- follow simple instructions
- get excited when with other children
- point to things or pictures when they are named

Milestones and Developmental Screenings



At 3 years (36 months), many children

- show affection for friends without prompting
- carry on a conversation using 2 to 3 sentences
- copy adults and friends
- play make-believe with dolls, animals, and people



At 4 years (48 months), many children

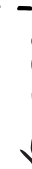


- tell stories
- would rather play with other children than by themselves play cooperatively with others
- wash their hands by themselves



At 5 years (60 months), many children

- run on their tiptoes
- recognize their names in print
- understand “yesterday” and tomorrow”
- put their shoes on the correct feet



Questions to ask your child’s doctor:



- Is my child’s development on track for his or her age?
- How can I track my child’s development?
- What should I do if I’m worried about my child’s progress?
- Where can I get more information?

Show us what your child can do with a FREE developmental screening.
Call: 630.896.4636 | Email: spark@foxvalleyunitedway.org

Click here to connect with a member of the SPARK Family Engagement Team - <https://www.sparkaurora.org/virtual-family-gateway-interview/>

Choosing Quality Care for Your Child

Most parents have mixed feelings about having their infants, toddlers or preschoolers in child care. Those first few years of life are critical for growth, development, and learning. Babies are also forming emotional attachments. Parents usually consider cost, availability, and convenience. But the quality of the care matters most. These lists of suggested questions and observations to make can help parents choose the best care for their child.

General Questions

Ask about the teachers and program

- What education or training do staff have who will be working with this age group?
- What is the teacher to child ratio? How many adults per child?
- What does the daily schedule look like for the children? Is there time for active play?
- What state licenses does the program/facility have?
- What are the program options? (Days and times) What is the policy for late pickup?

Observe the space if possible

- Is the space welcoming and child friendly? Warm and nurturing?
- Are activities and furniture developmentally appropriate for the children's age?
- Is the space intellectually stimulating and provides safety for all children?
- What is the noise level? Is the space crowded and is there an outdoor play area that provides the same level of safety for children?

Discuss your involvement as a parent

- Is there a record or summary of what the child did that day while in the program?
- How is parent involvement encouraged? Programs? Visits? Volunteer?
- When or with what frequency will the parent be able to talk to the provider or teacher about progress or concerns?

Infant - Toddler

- Is the facility clean? Does it have access to a sink for handwashing and a clean changing area? How often are toys washed and disinfected?
- Are small toys used by other children kept away from children under 3?
- Are bottles and food items stored safely? What does mealtime look like?
- Are there obvious safety hazards for young children? Open electrical sockets? Large furniture pieces or items stored up high out of a child's reach?

<http://illinoisearlylearning.org/tipsheets/toddler-choice.htm>

Preschool

- Ask about Program structure
- What is the staff structure(Director, Supervisor, Parent Coordinator)? Who is the contact person for parents? Does the staff change often?
- What is the mentality or theory of learning used? What curriculum is used? What are the education standards?
- Are meals provided or do parents provide meals? Are parents able to send food from home? Food restrictions?
- How much are children expected to sit and focus on a task?
- Will there be a meeting or welcome before the child starts in the program? Introduction or walk through for the child and family.

<http://illinoisearlylearning.org/tipsheets/preschoolchoice.htm>

Find Child Care and Early Learning Programs Near You
ExceleRate Illinois – www.excelerateillinois.org

Ready for Kindergarten?

Though all children develop at different rates, there are some common skills that can help you identify how ready for kindergarten your child is. As you look through this checklist of kindergarten readiness skills, don't be overly concerned if your child isn't able to do everything on the list. Have fun and practice these skills at home.



Language & Communication: Communication is at the heart of making needs known, interacting with friends and teachers and asking and answering questions.

- Knows and says first and last name.
- Speaks in a way that is fairly understandable by unfamiliar adults.
- Expresses frustration/anger with words
- Can follow 2- to 3-step directions
- Understands positional words (i.e., below, behind, on top of, near)



Gross Motor: Strong Gross motor control is important in helping students have the stamina to learn. It gives them the ability and balance they need to sit through a lesson and enables them to interact physically (play!) with peers.

- Is able to run and skip.
- Can do a two-footed jump and a one-legged hop.
- Alternates feet when climbing stairs.
- Can walk backwards.
- Attempts a two-handed catch of large ball.



Fine Motor: Small muscle coordination, or fine motor skills, helps to make children more independent in their classroom work and activities.

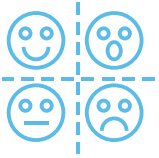
- Traces lines and basic shapes (circle, square, etc.)
- Holds a writing utensil with a non-fisted grip.
- Can use scissors for an intentional task, though may not have mastered the task. (i.e. cutting on a line)



Self-care: Being able to be independent in a large group will be crucial to school success and confidence!

- Uses the bathroom without help.
- Dresses self in the morning.
- Can snap, button and/or zip.
- Knows how to wash his hands.

Ready for Kindergarten?



Social/Emotional: Getting along with others, sharing, being socially correct and independent is a huge part of being a part of a learning community.

- Separates from caregiver easily or without undue distress
- Explores new things and is willing to take some risks.
- Is beginning to play and share with other children without the need for constant supervision.
- Is able to "wait his turn." (Within reason).
- Focuses on an adult-directed activity.
- Recognizes other people have feelings.



Math Readiness: Math concepts are important when your child begins to work with numbers, the ideas of "more" and "less," and learning about fact families.

- Counts from 1 to 10 without skipping numbers.
- Able to identify basic shapes, either verbally or by pointing to them.
- Can or is beginning to count using one-to-one correspondence. (Pointing at each item in a pile as he counts.)
- Can sort items by at least one way they are alike (by common attribute).
- Can identify some of the colors in an 8-count crayon box (black, blue, brown, green, orange, red, purple, and yellow) either verbally or by pointing to the correct color.



Pre Reading/Literacy: Pre-reading skills prepares your child to know how to sequence a story, tell a story, understand that letters and words work together to make stories. And eventually begin to read sight words.

- Recites or sings the alphabet.
- Visually identifies some of the letters.
- Likes listening to stories/books.
- Recognizes own name when it's written or typed.
- Can tell if two words rhyme, but might not be able to give a third word that rhymes with them.
- Tries to write his own name, with the same letters/symbols each time.
- Recognizes some environmental print (i.e., the logo of favorite restaurant, food, or other signs)
- Knows how to hold a book correctly (i.e. right side up, where the front cover is)

Kindergarten Registration & School District Information

Not sure what school district you belong to? Visit www.greatschools.org and enter your address to find out your school district.

Parent/legal guardian of children who will be five years of age on or before September 1, are encouraged to register their children for kindergarten.

In most cases, the parent/legal guardian will need to bring the following for kindergarten registration:

- Student's original birth certificate, valid passport, or other record recognized by a court of law
- Parent's/guardian's valid driver's license/state identification card
- Proof of Residency (three of the following):
 - A recent utility bill (gas, electric, phone, cable/Internet)
 - Home sale/closing documents
 - Current property tax statement
 - Home insurance statement
 - Home mortgage statement
 - Medical Card with current address
- Green Card/Matriculate Card with Current Address

Parent/legal guardian will also need to supply Immunization records (kindergarten-mandatory before first day of school) as required by State law, the required physical examination signed by the student's physician, vision examination, and dental examination.

West Aurora School District 129

Admission Office
1877 West Downer Pl.
630.301.5050 Fax line: 630.892.5194
Registration Fees (subject to change):
Full Day Kindergarten \$125

East Aurora School District 131

Centralized Registration
310 Seminary Avenue
Main Office: (630) 299-7302
Office hours: Monday–Thursday from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm
By appointment only.
Standard School Fees: Kindergarten \$30

Indian Prairie School District 204

School District 204 Main Office
780 Shoreline Drive, Aurora, IL 60504
630.375.3000
School Registration Fees:
Kindergarten, half day: \$73 | Kindergarten, full day: \$145

Community Unit School District 308

Central Registration
1008 Douglas Road, Oswego, IL, 60543
P: (630) 608-5090 F: (630) 608-5090
School Registration Fees:
Kindergarten, half day: \$60 | Kindergarten, full day: \$550

Resources for Families



Bright by Text Free text messages with tips and activities right to your phone. Text SPARKKIDS to 274448 and follow the prompts.

Aurora Public Library
www.aurorapubliclibrary.org

Santori Library
101 S. River St, Aurora, IL 60506
630-264-4100

Eola Road Branch
555 S. Eola Rd, Aurora, IL 60504
630-264-3400

West Branch
233 S. Constitution Dr, Aurora, IL 60506
630-264-3600



**Fox Valley Park District
Eola Community Center**
555 S. Eola Rd, Aurora, IL
630-851-8990
www.foxvalleyparkdistrict.org

Vaughan Athletic Center
2121 W. Indian Trail, Aurora, IL
630-907-9600

Prisco Community Center
150 W. Illinois Ave., Aurora, IL
630-859-8606



Aurora Area Interfaith Food Pantry
1110 Jericho Rd, Aurora, IL, 60506
(630)897-2127

Marie Wilkinson Food Pantry
834 N Highland Ave, Aurora, IL 60506
(630)897-5431



Two Rivers Head Start
1661 Landmark Rd, Aurora, IL 60506
(630)264-1444
• Food Pantry

Department of Human Resources
361 Old Indian Trail, Aurora, IL, 60506
(630)844-7400

Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) provides low-income, working families with access to quality, affordable child care .

Kane or DuPage counties: YWCA CCR&R, 2055 Army Trail Rd Suite 140, Addison, IL 60101 (630)790-6600
ywcachicago.org

Will or Kendall counties: Child Care Resource and Referral, 801 N Larkin Ave, Suite 202, Joliet, IL 60435, (815)741-4622,
assistance@childcarehelp.com, childcarehelp.com



Mutual Ground / Breaking Free
418 Oak Ave , Aurora, IL 60506
(630)897-0084
• Domestic violence and Sexual violence services
• Addiction services

Hesed House
659 S River St. Aurora, IL, 60506
(630)897-2156
• Homeless shelter



Kane County Health Department
1240 N Highland Ave, Aurora, IL 60506
(630) 208-3801



AMITA Mercy Medical Center
1325 N Highland Ave, Aurora, IL 60506
(630)859-2222

Rush-Copley Medical Center
2000 Ogden Ave; Aurora, IL 60504
630-978-6200

Aunt Martha's Community Health and Outreach Center
2124 Ogden Ave, Aurora, IL 60504
(877) 692-8686

Aurora Children's Dental Service provides free dental care to children in need.
aurorachildrendentalservice.org

Family Focus
550 2nd Ave, Aurora, IL, 60505
(630) 844-2550
• Immigration services
• Child and Family Programs

VNA Health Center
400 N Highland Avenue, Aurora, IL 60506
(630) 892-4355
• **WIC** Food assistance program for those who are low-income. (630)892-8181
• **Family Case Management** located within WIC department. Same day and walk in welcome.

VNA Dental Clinic
400 N. Highland Ave., Aurora, IL 60506
(630) 859-9124



Kane 2-1-1
Kane 2-1-1 is the number to call when you don't know who to call just dial 2-1-1 (888-865-9903) Or, text your zip code to 898-211 to be connected with resources all over Kane County. From rental assistance to mental health services.

Helpful Websites

Web Sites for You and Your Child

American Academy of Pediatrics – www.aap.org

Health and wellness information for families including information on developmental stages, immunizations, and parenting.

Common Sense Media - www.commonsensemedia.org

Website that offers age-based media reviews for families on books, movies, video games and much more.

ExceleRate Illinois – www.excelerateillinois.org

ExceleRate Illinois is a statewide quality rating and improvement system designed to make continuous quality improvement an everyday priority among early learning providers. The program establishes standards for helping infants, toddlers and preschool age children develop intellectually, physically, socially and emotionally.

Healthy Children - www.healthychildren.org

Powered by the the American Academy of Pediatrics, this website offers great resources for families on healthy living, safety and prevention, family life etc. With resources and guides categories by children's age, this website is filled with up to date information for parents.

National Association for the Education of Young Children –

www.families.naeyc.org

NAEYC is the world's largest organization working on behalf of young children. NAEYC has set 10 standards for early childhood programs that can help families make the right choice when they are looking for a child care center, preschool, or kindergarten.

Reading Rockets – www.readingrockets.org

Reading Rockets offer a wealth of strategies, lessons, and activities designed to help young children learn to read.

Parenting 24/7 – www.parenting247.org

News, information, and advice on family life designed for parents and grandparents of children ages newborn to teens. Features include articles, video clips of parents and experts discussing timely topics, breaking news, parenting newsletters, and recommendations for the best parenting resources on the web.

PBS Parents – www.pbs.org/parents

Information about child development, and fun educational activities for children to help get them ready for school.

SPARK - www.sparkaurora.org

An education initiative of Fox Valley United Way, SPARK (Strong, Prepared, And Ready for Kindergarten) connects families with early education and care that prepare their young children for success. SPARK hosts free family events and provides free developmental screening.

The Illinois Early Learning Project – www.illinoisearlylearning.org

Provides information on early care and education for parents, caregivers, and teachers of young children in Illinois. Also offers printable Tip Sheets for caregivers and parents, Frequently Asked Questions (and their answers) and links to "the best of the Web" on topics related to early care and education.

Talking is Teaching - www.talkingisteaching.org

Talking is Teaching is a campaign of Too Small to Fail, an initiative of the Clinton Foundation. It empowers parents with fun and easy ways to improve their babies' learning using books, parent videos, social media, and information from experts

Kindergarten Readiness Web Sites

The Kindergarten Survival Handbook; www.parenteducation.com

Activities and information for parents

Kindergarten milestones and skill builders by subject:-

www.familyeducation.com

Getting School Ready! Guide- www.earlylearning.org (available in several languages, including: Spanish and Chinese). This brochure provides tips to help schools prepare for new incoming kindergartens and their families.

KIDS: Families & Caregivers (isbe.net)

Kindergarten Individual Development Survey (KIDS)



Because kids don't come with instructions

Text **SPARKKIDS**
to **274 448** for free weekly
text messages with:

- Parenting tips
- Activities
- Local family events

Contact SPARK at:
spark@foxvalleyunitedway.org
630.896.4636
sparkaurora.org



SPARK A LOVE OF LEARNING

A strong foundation to succeed in school and life starts in a child's earliest years. Children who enter kindergarten without early social, math and literacy skills will likely remain behind their peers throughout their education.

**If you need help finding early childhood
education and care for your child contact our
Family Engagement Team:**

Kassia Eide

630.896.4636 x109

kassia.eide@foxvalleyunitedway.org

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www.sparkaurora.org

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