

Kindergarten, Here We Come!

A Poudre School District Guide
to Entering Kindergarten

Table of Contents

Section One: Register for Kindergarten at Your Neighborhood School

- Letter to Families
- Your Neighborhood School
- Kindergarten Registration Frequently Asked Questions
- District Kindergarten Checklist
- School Registration
- Registered for Kindergarten . . . Now What??
- Key People at School
- Map of Schools

Section Two: School Choice Application

- School Choice in PSD
- Choosing the Right Care/Education Classroom or Setting for Your Child
- What Should You Look For When Visiting a School?

Section Three: Kindergarten Transition Activities for You and Your Child

- Kindergarten transition Timeline
- Preparing for a Successful Transition
- Learning at Home
- Resources
- Look What I Can Do!

Section One: Register for Kindergarten at Your Neighborhood School

Letter to Families

Esteemed parents, teachers, paras, family mentors, and partners,

Every transition counts! Every time we give tummy time to an infant to strengthen left and right neck muscles, we are working on transitions that lead to school readiness. Every time we ask a question when we read aloud together, we are working on transitions that lead to school readiness. Transition to Kindergarten is not a one-time event. It is something that we work towards together from before birth until that night before they walk into their classroom! Congratulations on all the successful steps you have already taken.

Please use this transition handbook this year before your child goes to Kindergarten as a guide. It will help you consider questions such as, “how can I learn more about Kindergarten options in PSD?” Later this year, you will receive a list of Kindergarten Open Houses and Informational Nights hosted by each school. You can find your home school on the psdschools.org home page under the tab **schools/find your neighborhood school**. Kindergarten registration for your child is in early winter each year, please check the PSD website for specific dates. You must register for Kindergarten at your home school, including if your child with identified needs will receive specialized services at a center-based school in Kindergarten. Your child’s registration information will be transferred to the Center Services school. Elementary School of Choice forms are due at about the same time if you want to consider schools other than your home school.

I know this year will generate many questions, and your 3-5 Family Mentor, PSD preschool teacher, or childcare center is a good place to start getting answers. Please contact any of the staff here at Fullana Learning Center for further information and assistance. Congratulations in advance for your smooth transition to Kindergarten!

Regards,

Carolyn Martin
Director of Early Childhood Education
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Your Neighborhood School

You have many choices of schools in Poudre School District, but your relationship with your neighborhood school is special. Your family is guaranteed a classroom at your neighborhood school. You should register for Kindergarten at your neighborhood school, even if you are considering other options.

Tools to Help you Determine Your Neighborhood School

As an Early Childhood family, your neighborhood school may not be the same as the one your child attends now.

If your child has an IEP and will attend a different school to access services, register at your neighborhood school and your information will be transferred to the Center Services school if your child will receive services there.

If your family qualifies for McKinney-Vento services, and your transportation plan is not to your neighborhood school, please use the School of Choice Application to apply to remain at that school. You should also register at your neighborhood school.

Complete PSD Kindergarten Registration information is at: www.psdschools.org/kinder

On this page, click on the “School Boundaries” link to make sure you should register in PSD.

Click on “Find Your Neighborhood School” to determine which school is your neighborhood school.

Also on the website you’ll find the PSD Schools Directory. In December, 2020 you’ll find the 2021-22 Kindergarten brochure with registration dates.



Kindergarten Registration-Frequently Asked Questions

✓ **What do I need to bring to Kindergarten registration?**

Bring your child’s:

1. Birth certificate (original or certified copy preferred)
2. Emergency contact information
3. Immunization records
4. Enrollment forms (found on the PSD website)
5. Proof of address

What immunizations are required for Kindergarten enrollment?

Vaccine	Shots	Notes
DTP/DTaP/ DT/Td	5	May enter with 4 doses if #4 was given at/after age 4. (“P” pertussis is not required when age 7-9)
Polio	4	May enter with 3 doses if #3 was given at/after age 4
MMR	2	
Hepatitis B	3	
Varicella/ Chicken Pox	2	2 doses at least 28 days apart (prefer 3 mo. apart)-or history of disease by health provider or lab test

- **What schools offer a full-day Kindergarten program?** All schools in PSD offer full-day programs.
- **Is there a cost for full-day Kindergarten?** No, all-day kindergarten is tuition free.
- **What is the age requirement for Kindergarten?** Children must be 5 years old on or before October 1 of the year they attend school.
- **How do I know which school is my neighborhood school?** Visit www.psdschools.org/school_resources/school-locator or call (970) 482-7420.
- **Where do I register my child for school?** All children must be registered at their neighborhood school. Even if you are considering the School of Choice process, you must still register your child for Kindergarten at your neighborhood school.
- **How will my child get to kindergarten?** District transportation is provided for elementary students who live a specific distance away from school. Round-trip transportation is the responsibility of the parents for School Choice students. Find out more at <https://www.psdschools.org/programs-services/transportation>
- **What is School Choice?** Whether you choose a neighborhood school outside your boundary area or a specialized school, PSD’s School Choice process allows you to select the school that best fits your child’s educational needs, on a space available basis. Transportation is the responsibility of the parents for School Choice. To find out more or

to begin the online process, visit the PSD website www.psdschools.org/schools/school-options-choice

Registered for Kindergarten... Now What?

Thank you for registering your child.
Congratulations on completing this important step in your child's educational process!

After you have registered:

1. **Save a copy of the registration forms you submitted.** Keeping them with this handbook is a great way to stay organized.
2. **Keep this handbook handy throughout the year for:**
 - tips for learning at home
 - organizing timeline and important information
3. **If you have filled out a School Choice application,**
 - watch your email for your child's school acceptance notice with any additional steps to complete the process
 - call the school for a timeline of notification
4. **Get ready to start school!** Your child's school will contact you with more information about open houses and other opportunities to welcome you to the school community. Watch your school's website for other information.

Families who qualify for free or reduced lunch will have any applicable school fees waived or reduced by the district. Registration is online at <https://www.psdschools.org/programs-services/school-meals/free-and-reduced-meals>

As you finalize your decision about what school your child will be attending, use this handbook to help you organize all the information about your school in one place. Please see the next page for a worksheet called "Key People at School" to help you keep a list of important phone numbers handy.

Kindergarten transition guide for Poudre School District preschool families

Key People at School

As your child moves to elementary school, there will be several new people to get to know. Provided below are spaces for you to record names and contact information.

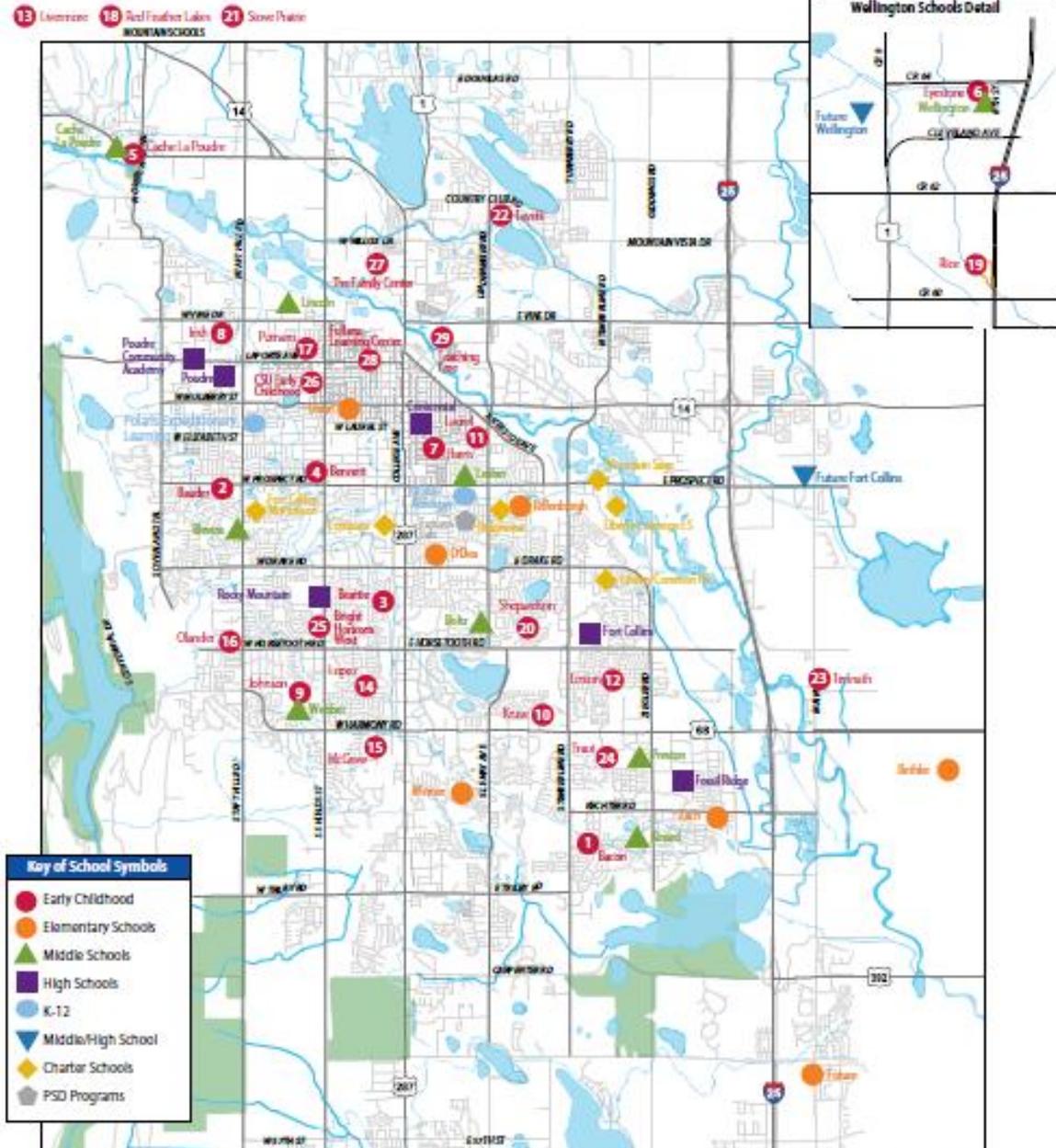
Position	Name	Phone Number	E-mail address
Principal			
Assistant Principal			
Office Manager			
Nurse/Health Tech			
Counselor			
Kindergarten Teachers			

Other important people you might need to know...

Special Education Teachers			
Speech/Language Therapist			
Occupational Therapist			
Interventionist			
Family Liaison			
Art Teacher			
Music teacher			
PE Teacher			
Librarian			
Preschool Teacher			
Parents at child's school			

School Attendance Phone Number _____

2020-2021 Poudre School District Map of Schools Early Childhood Education Sites



Elementary Schools with Early Childhood Sites

- | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 Bacon | 9 Johnson* | 17 Putnam* |
| 2 Bauder | 10 Kruse | 18 Red Feather Lakes (AlphaBest) |
| 3 Beattie* | 11 Laurel | 19 Rice* |
| 4 Bennett | 12 Linton* | 20 Shepardson |
| 5 Cache La Poudre | 13 Livermore (AlphaBest) | 21 Stove Prairie (AlphaBest) |
| 6 Eyestone | 14 Lopez* | 22 Tavelli |
| 7 Harris* | 15 McGraw | 23 Timnath |
| 8 Irish* | 16 Olander | 24 Traut |

Community Sites

- 25 Bright Horizons West*
- 26 CSU Early Childhood*
- 27 The Family Center*
- 28 Fullana Learning Center*
- 29 Teaching Tree*

* Full-day option available at this site

Section Two:

School Choice

Application

School Choice in PSD

PSD's School Choice process allows families to select the school that best meets their child's educational needs based on space availability and eligibility requirements. A school choice application is required to attend a school that is not a student's neighborhood school or to attend a choice-only school.

If you are interested in the School Choice option:

1. *Research your options:*

Neighborhood schools offer a rigorous standards-driven curriculum, and gifted, enrichment, and accelerated options. Other schools may have a specific curriculum or focus like International Baccalaureate, Core Knowledge, hands-on learning, dual language immersion, and online learning.

For more information on school options visit:

<https://www.psdschools.org/schools/school-options-choice>

2. *The School Choice Application and School Choice Consideration timelines* can be found at: <http://psdschoolchoiceapplication.com/site.php>

No School Choice application is needed if you are attending your neighborhood school!

Kindergarten transition guide for Poudre School District preschool families

Choosing the Right Care/Education Classroom or Setting

* Adapted from the United States Department of Education's Choosing a School for you Child booklet

Write down five things that are the most important to you and your child's education. As you go through the selection process, you may want to add to and revise your list.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Start your search by thinking about your child. After all, you know your son or daughter better than anyone else does. Consider these guiding questions.

Child needs

1. What type of environment does your child do best in? Think about structure and schedule.

2. Does your child need more challenging work or a more creative environment?

3. Does your child generally need extra help or more time to complete a task?

How does your child learn best

1. Does your child learn best by seeing how things work?

2. By reading about how something works?

3. By listening? _____

4. By participating in discussions?

Location of School

1. Do you want your child to go to a school within walking distance of your home?

2. How far are you willing to have your child bussed? Does your child have special bussing

needs? _____

3. How far are you willing to drive your child to school?

4. Does your child want to be in a school with his or her friends?

5. Do you want your child to go to a school near your after-school care?
Near where you work or near a close relative?

Curriculum

1. Do you want a school that has a special focus or theme for teaching the curriculum?

2. Does your child have special learning needs? What are some supports the school should have to accommodate those needs?

3. What approaches to teaching and learning are you hoping the school will have in place? (e.g. group projects, individual performance, frequent testing?)



What Should You Look for When Visiting a School?

Consider the whole school. It is important to look beyond the kindergarten classroom when choosing the most appropriate elementary school for your child.

Guiding questions to help you:	Notes:
Number of classes per grade? (How many 1 st grade classrooms?)	
Class size and teacher/student ratio	
Are there any aides, volunteers, student teachers?	
Hours of the school day	
What is the school's mission statement	
Does the school have any specialties or curriculum enrichment?	
What after-school programming is offered? (Do not forget to ask about cost, hours, transportation, etc.)	
Is the school welcoming to diverse children and families?	
Is there an English Language Acquisition (ELA) Program?	
What are the opportunities for parent involvement?	
What is the school's discipline policy or strategies?	



What Should You Look for When Visiting a School? *Continued*

Observations about the following:	Notes:
Facilities (this may include the playground, gym, cafeteria/auditorium, library)	
School atmosphere and appearance?	
The principal/assistant principal?	
The office staff members?	
The teachers?	

Some schools offer times to visit Kindergarten classrooms. Please contact the schools of interest to you to find out when visiting time is offered. When visiting classrooms that are in session, please be mindful that the first role of the teacher is to attend to the students enrolled in the classroom. Hold questions for the breaks in the school day or make a list of questions to ask during an open house event or Kindergarten Orientation/Information night.

During your visit, keep in mind that the kindergarteners you are seeing have developed a great deal since September. Your child will not be expected to start Kindergarten in the fall performing at the same level of what you may be observing. Take a deep breath and enjoy your experience.

Observations in the classroom:

The Language used by the teacher:	Notes:
Are directions stated clearly in a way most children can understand?	
Are children given time to process and follow through on instructions?	
The language used by the children:	
How long are their sentences?	
What types of words do they use and understand?	
Behavior of the children:	
How long are children expected to sit still in a group?	
How much independence is expected? (i.e. when going to the bathroom, in caring for materials?)	
Classroom Environment:	
What type of work is being completed by the children?	
How are the children interacting with each other?	
What does the teacher do to assure that all the children are engaged and able to access and participate in the lesson?	
What are the roles/expectations for parents, teachers, support staff?	

Section Three: Kindergarten Transition Activities for You and Your Child

Kindergarten transition guide for Poudre School District preschool families

Kindergarten Transition Timeline

Every Month

- Read to your child each day.

August

- Establish a schedule at home, time to wake up, time to go to sleep. See Preparing for a Successful Transition to Kindergarten (pg. 19) for tips.

September

- Foster independence in your child's daily routine, such as bathroom skills, being responsible for their backpack and coat, selecting what to wear.
- Attend the Be Ready Fair.

October

- Meet with and talk to your preschool teacher about the skills your child needs to strengthen before Kindergarten.
- Talk to your child about Kindergarten and going to elementary school.

November

- Find out more about your neighborhood school and others in Poudre School District. To find your neighborhood school visit www.psdschools.org/school-resources/school-locator.
- Make a list of schools you plan to visit before Kindergarten registration.
- Make sure well child check and vaccinations are up to date.

December

- Look for the district-wide Kindergarten brochure in your mail.
- If your child has identified needs, PSD's Integrated Services Department may communicate with you about your child attending a Center Services school in December or January.

January

- Attend the district Kindergarten Information Nights to learn about school choices for your child.
- Refer to the district-wide Kindergarten Brochure, which was mailed to you in December, for registration dates.
- If your child has identified needs and will be attending a Center Services school, attend the transition meeting that will be set up for you. Register at your neighborhood school.

Kindergarten transition guide for Poudre School District preschool families

- If your child will not be attending your neighborhood school or Integrated Services Center Services school, fill out a School Choice Application, which can be found online at www.psdschools.org/schools/school-options-choice.
- Register for Kindergarten at your neighborhood school, even if you have put in an application for School Choice.
- Practice skills that need to be strengthened before Kindergarten. Refer to the Learning at Home page in this handbook.

February-March

- Visit the school where your child will be attending Kindergarten, take a tour of the building, and introduce yourself to the principal.
- Get information about transportation options to and from your child's school (if you applied for school choice you will be responsible for transportation).

April

- Find out if your school will be doing any special events this summer for incoming kindergarteners.

May

- Check with your child's school about their back to school schedule so you can plan accordingly (not all Kindergarten classes start on the same day as outlined by the PSD district calendar).

May-June

- Make a trip from your home to your child's school once or twice. Time how long the trip takes and plan what time you will need to leave each morning to be on time.
- Play on the playground together while you are at the school.

May-June-July

- Take your child to the library for summer activities.

July-August

- Buy school supplies – check local stores for school supply lists.
- Apply for Free or Reduced lunch on August 1st.
- Check for email communications from your school.

Preparing for a Successful Transition to Kindergarten

Here are some suggested activities for helping your child say “good-bye” to their Preschool or Early Child Care Center include:

<p><i>Start a “count down” calendar to the first day of Kindergarten.</i></p> <p>Make a paper chain representing the days until school begins. Taking off a link each day can make the passage of time real to your child.</p> <p>Use a regular calendar and mark off each day.</p>	<p><i>Consider any logistical changes the transition will create.</i></p> <p>Will your child need to leave earlier or later in the morning? Will there be a bus? Will you drive or walk to school? How will kindergarten change your family’s existing schedule?</p>
<p><i>Practice new routines.</i></p> <p>Have a set wake-up time and bedtime time each day. Know what time your child needs to wake up for kindergarten and start waking up at this time over the summer. According to the Pediatric Association, children five and six years of age need 10-11 hours of sleep each night (i.e. if you need to start the day at 6:30 a.m., the latest bedtime for your child should be 8:30 p.m.)</p> <p>Lengthen the day without naps. There is no nap time in Kindergarten and your child needs to be prepared for the longer day.</p> <p>Drive, walk, or ride the new route to school.</p> <p>Discuss the new school schedule and expectations for eating, playing, learning, and other classroom activities.</p> <p>Go to the library to checkout children’s books that talk about Kindergarten (The Night before Kindergarten, Ms. Bindergarten Gets Ready for Kindergarten and other back to school topics your librarian suggests).</p>	<p><i>Once your child begins school, get involved in the school and classroom:</i></p> <p>Ask about family involvement opportunities the school offers.</p> <p>Ask about volunteer opportunities in the school and classroom. If you plan to volunteer at your child’s school, you MUST register on the PSD website first.</p> <p>Attend workshops or family nights.</p> <p>Join the Parent/Teacher organization (PTO), School Accountability Committee (SAC), and/or Student Success Team (SST).</p>

Learning at Home

Families are so busy – it is hard to find extra time, but little changes add up.

Children Begin Learning at Home.
You count! You and your family are the first people in your child’s life to:

- Appreciate who they are and what they do!
- Encourage curiosity.
- Communicate family values.
- Establish a strong foundation for learning that lasts a lifetime!

Young children are more likely to thrive in school when...

- They know lots of words
- They can express their ideas and needs

Spending time talking and playing with your child...

- Increase their vocabulary
- Makes them feel good about themselves
- Helps them begin school eager and ready to learn

Play to Help Your Child Learn

These activities have no-cost, no calories, and require no batteries! Just 20 minutes a day makes a big difference.

Activity: Once Upon a Time:

- Tell a story about yourself
- Talk about your grandparents
- Ask him/her to tell you a story

TALK

Talk often to your child!

Listen carefully to what he/she says. Tell stories and jokes.

When your child hears you talk, they learn new words.

Your stories help them love stories!

PLAY

Encourage your child to engage in plenty of playtime. Play encourages the use of imagination, gives your child language practice and is fun.

Playtime with your child is a great time for the whole family to share words and ideas.

GO PLACES

When you go places, there are lots of new things to talk about.

Remember what is routine for you is probably new to your child.

Activity: Driving in the Car

- Turn off the radio and have a conversation with your child.
- Describe what you see out the window.
- Sing songs.
- Ask questions about what your child can see.
- Be sure to listen to your child.

Activity: Let's Pretend

- Play pretend with your child.
- Act out events that interest them.
- Pretend to have a birthday party, go to a restaurant, fly in a plane, go swimming or sledding.
- Remember, it is just pretend.

DRAW OR WRITE

Drawing and scribbling are the beginning stages of writing. Drawing helps develop fine motor skills and their imagination.

- Have your child “write” their own shopping list, even if it is just scribbles. Use anything you have, plain or recycled paper and crayons or washable markers.
- Make pictures and pretend to write.

Activity: I Spy

You can play this anywhere, while shopping, driving, or reading the newspaper.

- Pick a letter from your child’s name and see if you can find it.
- Pick a color and see if you can find an object in that same color.
- Pick a number and have your child find that many items.

READ

The more books your child reads, the more successful they will be in school. Set the example for lifelong reading.

- Books don’t have to be new to be great.
- Ask relatives and friends to give books as presents.
- Pick up books at a yard sale.
Go to the library
- Talk about pictures in books.
- Show children how to use books by showing them how to turn pages gently and handle them with care.

Make a commitment to read to your child every day! Anytime of the day works. It WILL be the most important 20 minutes in your day.

After reading a book, talk with your child about each of your favorite parts of the story. Ask them about their favorite part.

Activity: My Favorite Part

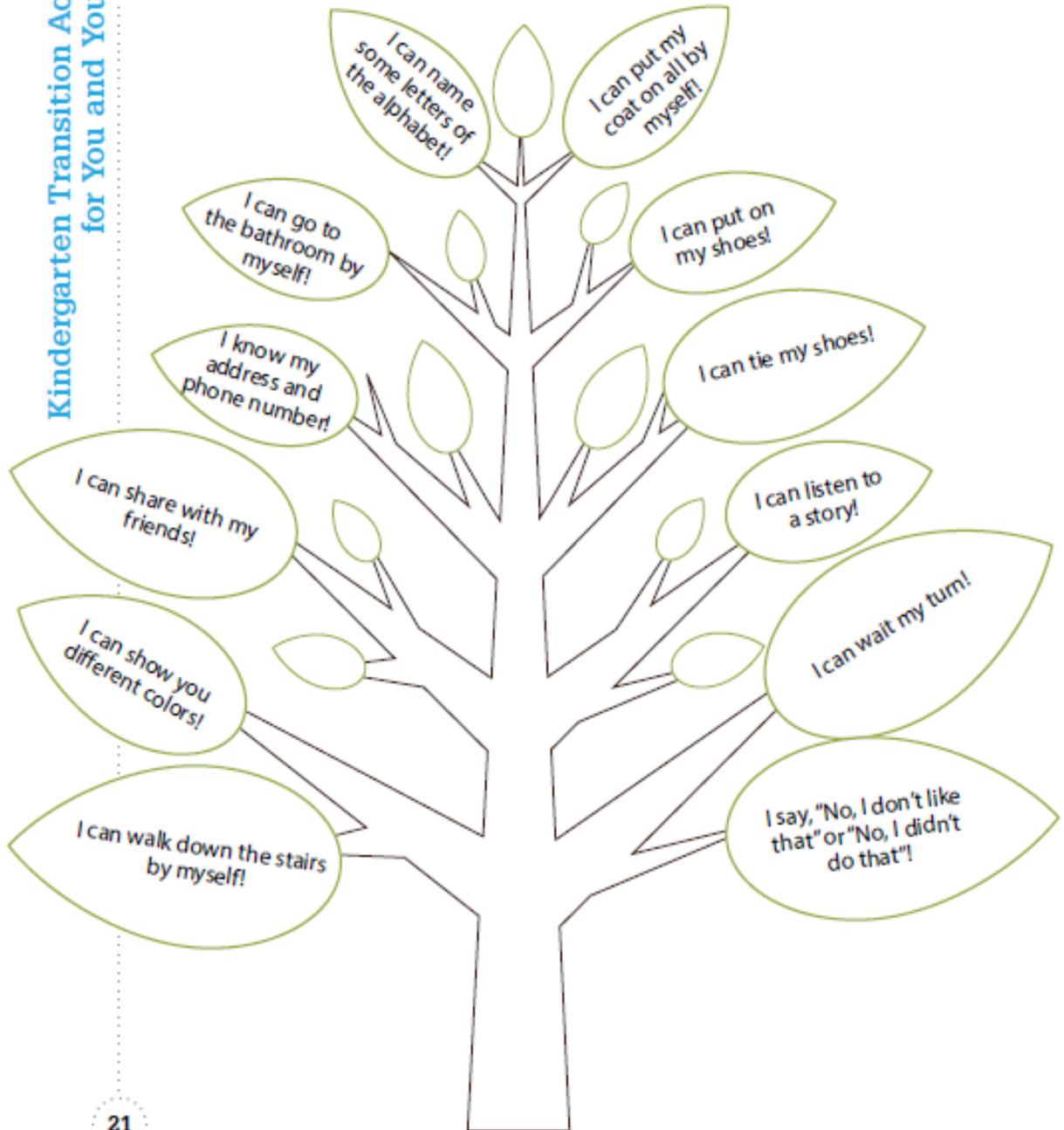
- After reading a book, talk with your child about each of your favorite parts of the story.
- Ask them about their favorite part.



Look What I Can Do!

Put a mark or color the things that you can do.

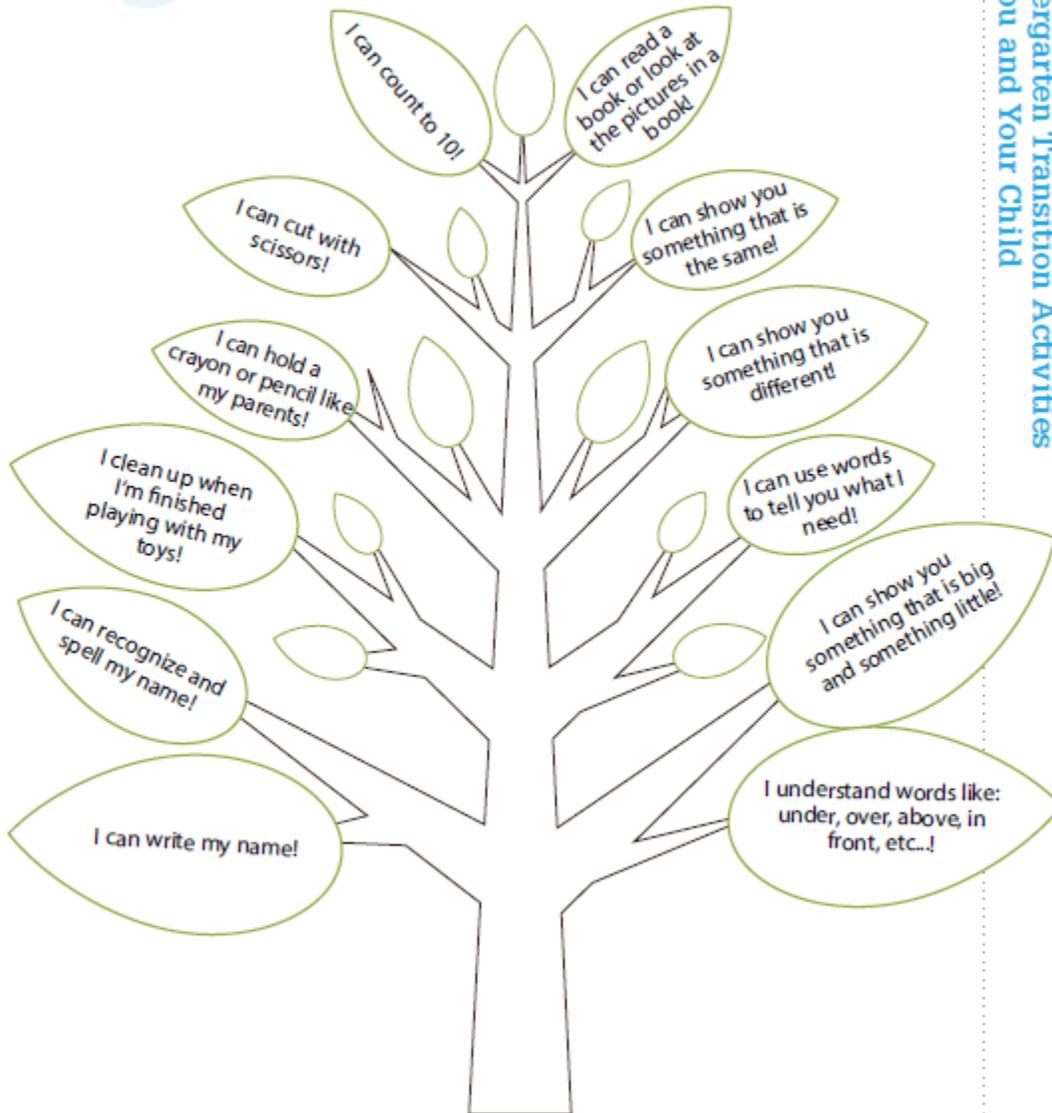
Kindergarten Transition Activities
for You and Your Child



Look What I Can Do! *continued*



Kindergarten Transition Activities
for You and Your Child



Kindergarten transition guide for Poudre School District preschool families

Resources

To learn more about child development, kindergarten readiness and transition please visit:

Local resources:

<https://bereadylarimercounty.org/>

<https://www.pdschools.org/kinder>

National resources:

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/transitions/article/transition-kindergarten>

<https://www.pta.org/>

<https://www.pta.org/center-for-family-engagement>

<https://develpingchild.harvard.edu/resources/>

www.naceyc.org/our-work/for-families

www.zerotothree.org/early-learning/brain-development

www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/childrens-health/basics/childrens-health/hlv-20049425