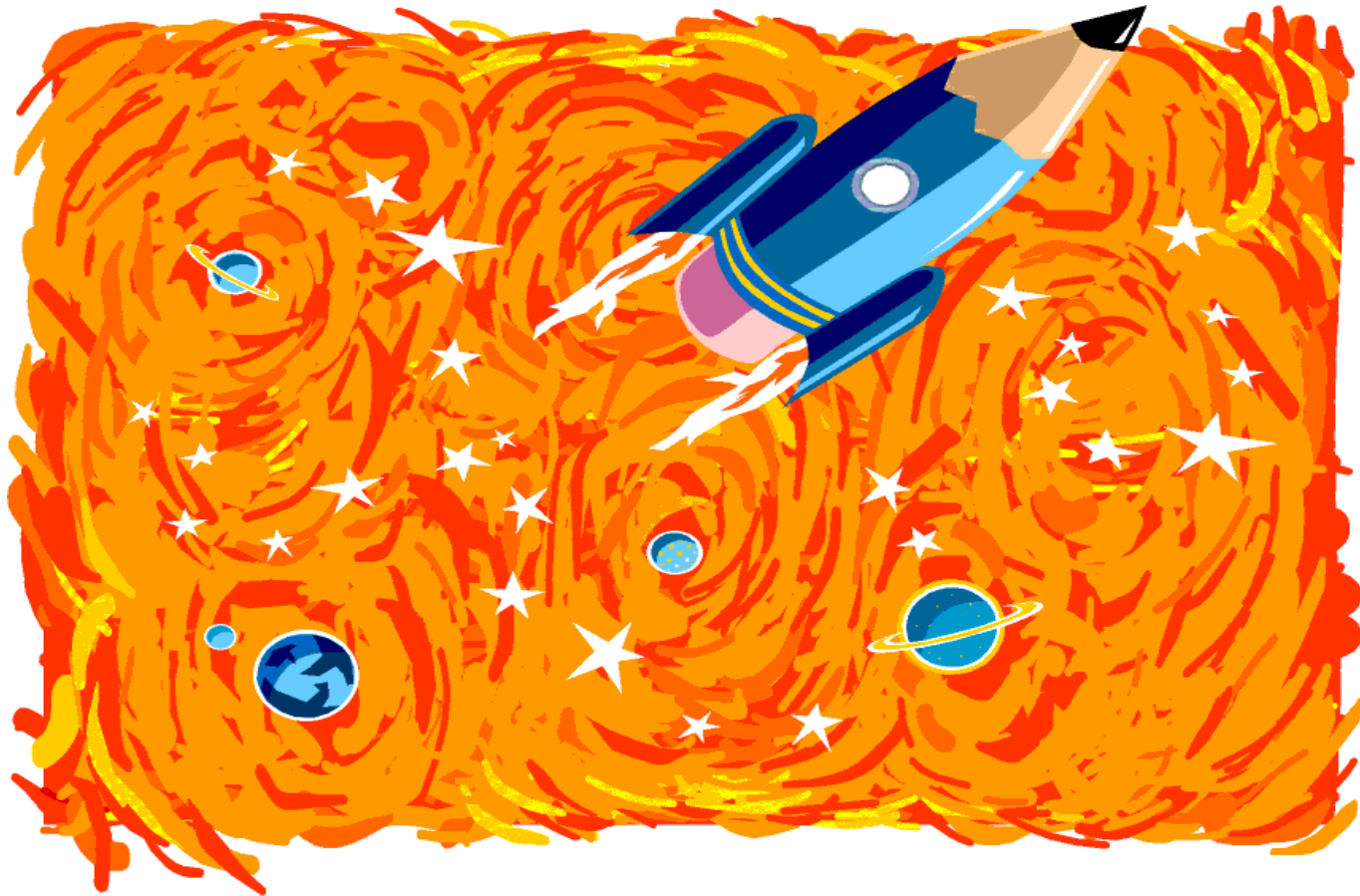


Residency Roundtable: Indicators of Cognition and Approaches to Learning



School Readiness Indicators:

For What Purpose?

- ◆ To describe child, family and community conditions
- ◆ To inform state and local community planning and policy making
- ◆ To measure progress in improving child outcomes
- ◆ To improve programs for children and families
- ◆ To monitor impact of investments and policy choices

School Readiness Indicator Development:

What Makes a Good Indicator?

Reflects an important child outcome :

Something you care about enough to measure and track.

Something political leaders want to know.

Reflects access to programs for children that are "widely accepted" as important child outcomes: Health insurance coverage, Early prenatal care, High quality child care.

Has policy relevance:

Can be influenced by program or policy changes.

Helps you to better understand the impact of investments or policy choices.

Uses available data that is timely, annual, available at the city-town level.

What is Appropriate for Success in School?

Qualities Kindergarten teachers value:

- ◆ Physically healthy, rested, and well-nourished.
- ◆ Able to communicate needs, wants, and thoughts verbally.
- ◆ Enthusiastic and curious in approaching new activities.

NCES, "Public School Kindergarten Teachers' Views of Children's Readiness for School," 1993.

Courtesy of John Love, Mathematica Policy Research

The Five Dimensions of Readiness in Children

- ◆ Physical well-being and motor development
- ◆ Social and emotional development
- ◆ Approaches to learning
- ◆ Language development
- ◆ Cognition and general knowledge

Supporting the Healthy Cognitive Development of Young Children

- ◆ What is needed by all children?
- ◆ What are the special considerations by age group:
Birth to age 3? Preschool? K to 3?
- ◆ What about children at high risk?

What is Cognition?

- ◆ A child's understanding of the world
- ◆ Knowledge in three broad areas of academics: reading, mathematics, and general knowledge
- ◆ Knowledge regarding similarities, differences, and associations
- ◆ Knowledge about societal conventions, such as the assignment of particular letters to sounds
- ◆ Knowledge about shapes, spatial relations, and number concepts
- ◆ Stimulated by children's environment and experiences

What is Approaches to Learning?

- ◆ Ways in which kindergartners approach and perform specific tasks in a variety of situations
- ◆ Use of skills, knowledge, and capacities
- ◆ Includes enthusiasm, curiosity, persistence on tasks, temperament
- ◆ Incorporates cultural patterns and values