



Fall 2004

School Readiness Program

Inyo County

Success for Every Child

First 5 Inyo County and its community partners are committed to ensuring "Success for Every Child." Our School Readiness Initiative engages families, community members, and educators in the important work of preparing children for elementary school and life.

School Readiness funding is generated by California's Proposition 10 tobacco tax initiative, supporting the optimal development of children from prenatal to age five. This initiative is a statewide effort developed by First 5 California in partnership with local county commissions to ensure all children enter school ready to learn.

What is School Readiness?

"Readiness" is a term used to describe preparation for what comes next! School readiness means that when children enter school, they are developmentally, physically and emotionally ready to learn.

Research shows that a child's brain develops rapidly during the first three years of life. Experiences that children have from conception until they enter Kindergarten play a significant role in brain structure and function, affecting cognitive, emotional and social capacities throughout life.

In 1990 the National Education Goals Panel identified school readiness

as a national priority. The definition of school readiness covers three key areas:

- ▲ Children's readiness for school
- ▲ Schools' readiness for children
- ▲ Family and community supports and services that contribute to children's readiness for school success.

Parents, pre-K teachers, schools, and community programs working together provide the best base for children's success in school.

School Readiness Programs are currently available at the following elementary schools in Inyo County:

Big Pine Unified School District:

- ★ Big Pine Elementary

Lone Pine Unified School District:

- ★ Lo-Inyo Elementary
- ★ Olancha Elementary



Playful early experiences set the stage for future learning.

Readiness Partners

The following partners are dedicated to preparing children for a successful school experience:

- ♥ Julie Lambdin, 876-5581
School Readiness Coordinator
- ♥ Lorelee Mairs, 938-2222
Literacy Coordinator
Big Pine Unified School District
- ♥ IMACA REACH & Head Start
873-3021 Big Pine
876-4133 Lone Pine
- ♥ Verna Sisk, 873-5123
Child Development Administrator
Inyo County Office of Education
- ♥ Gary Donnelly, 876-5394
Lone Pine Indian Education Center
Lo-Inyo School Board Member
- ♥ Jeff Quackenbush, 876-1011
Healthy Communities
- ♥ Big Pine Library, 938-2420
- ♥ Lone Pine Library, 876-5031
- ♥ Linda Hubbs, 876-8252
Director, Mt. Whitney Preschool
- ♥ Joan Huff, 938-3276
OVDC Big Pine Child Care
- ♥ Jessica Klemencic, 873-3258
Dental Case Manager, Inyo County
Health & Human Services
- ♥ Kathy Peterson, 872-0925
First 5 Inyo County





Ready for School?

What does it mean for children to be "ready" for school?

The National Education Goals Panel states that there are five dimensions of "readiness in children"

- ▲ Physical well-being & motor development
- ▲ Social & emotional development
- ▲ Approaches to learning
- ▲ Language development
- ▲ Cognition & general knowledge

What does it mean for families to be ready for school?

Ready families have tools and knowledge of health and social service resources they need to help prepare their children to reach their greatest potential.

What does it mean for communities to be ready for school?

Ready communities have access to and provide families with health plan enrollment, basic health care, child abuse prevention, economic and educational opportunities, quality child care and access to early learning opportunities for children.

What does it mean for schools to be ready for children?

Ready schools reach out to families, provide Kindergarten transition programs, communicate Kindergarten standards, cross train staff, share curriculum, and work collaboratively with community agencies to link families to them when needed.

Quality Preschool Programs

Current research in brain development shows that early learning (especially from birth to five years) can directly influence a child's ability to learn and succeed in school. These trends have contributed to a growing awareness of the importance of quality early education and pre-Kindergarten experiences for children. Research indicates that preschoolers who attend high quality programs:

- ♥ Enter Kindergarten with skills necessary for school success
- ♥ Show greater understanding of verbal and numerical concepts
- ♥ Show ability to stay with an activity longer
- ♥ Are more likely to make normal progress through the primary grades
- ♥ Are less often placed in special education classes

The quality of a child's learning experience should be as important before the fifth birthday as after! Staff at the following preschools continuously refine and expand their teaching skills through participation in professional development and training activities offered by the Inyo County Office of Education (ICOE), Child Development Division:

- Big Pine State Preschool, 938-2222
- OVDC Big Pine Child Care, 938-3276
- Mt. Whitney Preschool, 876-8252
- Warren Hansen State Preschool, 876-5467
- Lone Pine Indian Education Center child development programs, 876-5394

For more information about preschools, call ICOE at 873-5123, ext. 331. For help with subsidized child care, or to learn about starting your own licensed child care, call 873-5123, ext. 305.



Get Ready for K!

Pre-Kindergarten Transition Programs help preschoolers bridge the gap from preschool to Kindergarten. The summer Pre-Kindergarten Programs — "Get Ready for K" — provide students the opportunity to make friends with future Kindergarten peers, play, acquire early literacy skills, and develop Kindergarten readiness skills. Sessions run approximately six weeks, with half-day educational and social interaction for all children who will enter Kindergarten in the fall. Children without prior preschool experience have first priority for registering.

Programs are located at the Big Pine State Preschool and Lo-Inyo Elementary School Kindergarten Room, and are offered by the Inyo County Office of Education. For more information about enrolling your child in this *free* program, call School Readiness Coordinator Julie Lambdin, at 876-5581.



See the enclosed flyer for a list of other current activities!

IMACA Parents as Teachers (PAT)

Babies are born to learn, and parents are their first teacher. Parents as Teachers (PAT) is a nationally recognized home visiting program providing education and family support. Program staff provide the information, support and encouragement parents need to help their children develop optimally during the first years of life. PAT serves families throughout pregnancy until their child enters Kindergarten. PAT services are free, regardless of income or immigration status.

Personal Visits

A Certified Parent Educator will visit families in their home, twice per month, to share age-appropriate child development information, help parents learn to observe their children, address parenting concerns, and do play activities with parents and their child. Visits will be directed by parents and their growing child's needs. Visits are available in Spanish or English.

Group Meetings

Parents enrolled in the program meet once per month to share infor-

mation about parenting issues—and learn from and support each other.

Screenings

Developmental, health, dental, vision and hearing screenings will be offered, and referral for follow up services made as needed.

Parent Kits

Includes six videos, children's books, hand puppets, and much more.

Resource Networking

Information and referrals are provided on different programs available to meet participating families' needs and interests.

To enroll in PAT or for more information, call IMACA at 876-4133.

Raising a Reader

Raising a Reader, a nationally-recognized early literacy program, begins with parent-child lap reading and book-snuggling to provide playful, joyful reading together experiences and eventually introduces families to the public library system. Families are provided with bright red book bags filled with age-appropriate children's books.

Also, the Big Pine and Lone Pine county libraries have an increased number of books for children ages 0-5 years. Check them out!

Raising a Reader will be available through the PAT home visiting program, and the following preschools:

- ◆ Big Pine State Preschool
- ◆ OV CDC Big Pine Child Care
- ◆ Mt. Whitney Preschool
- ◆ Warren Hansen State Preschool

For more information on *Raising a Reader*, contact Margaret Bruce at 873-5123, ext. 322.

Parent & Family Education Activities

A variety of parent and child activities, and parent-only education sessions, are offered year-round as well as seasonally. Activities are offered during the day and in the evening, and are designed to fit the various needs of individual families in promoting school readiness. Both English and Spanish-speaking staff will be available at most of the activities.

Inyo County Child Care Resource and Referral Office, Child Care Connection—operated by the Inyo County Office of Education—invites all children 18 months to five years to a morning full of learning, reading, and fun at the following times and locations:

Terrific Tuesdays

Big Pine School Band Room
1st and 3rd Tuesdays each month,
10–11:00 a.m.

Wonderful Wednesdays

Olancho School Multipurpose Room
2nd and 4th Wednesday each month
9:30–10:30 a.m.

For more information, call Child Care Connection at 873-5123, ext. 322.



YOU are your child's first and most influential teacher.

Inyo County School Readiness Initiative

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Lone Pine Unified School District
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Success for Every Child!

Please recycle this newsletter. Pass it on!



We're on the Web!
www.ccfc.ca.gov/Inyo

10 Ways to Help Your Child Succeed in School and Life

- 1 Talk with your child. Be available to listen and share information.
- 2 Support learning at home. Share books daily; let your child see you reading. Limit TV viewing.
- 3 Encourage your child to make choices, even if it means making mistakes. Help him learn and grow from these experiences; this fosters self-esteem and confidence.
- 4 Keep your child healthy; promote good nutrition and model an active, healthy lifestyle.
- 5 Pay attention to your child's strengths. Set high but realistic expectations and help him develop realistic self-expectations.
- 6 Communicate with your child's school; stay involved and keep informed on a regular basis.
- 7 Encourage your child to explore and discover the world. Foster new interests and help him make the most of the world around him.
- 8 Help your child develop friendships and recognize the importance of trust in relationships. Teach your child to be sensitive to other people's feelings.
- 9 Keep your child safe; teach her appropriate safety procedures and how to avoid dangerous situations.
- 10 Encourage community participation and awareness in your child. Help him learn to take his energy and skills beyond the classroom to help others.