

## Overview

In addition to the many ways that Head Start helps children and families prepare for the transition to kindergarten, programs can host a kindergarten registration event. The purpose of this guide is to help Head Start personnel plan a kindergarten registration event that is friendly and accessible to all children and families. The **Get Ready** suggestions help you plan for a successful kindergarten registration event. The **Get Set** suggestions focus on putting your plan into action and increasing public awareness of the event. The **Go!** section offers a checklist and reflection tool for the day of the event to determine its effectiveness and ensure that children graduating from Head Start, and their families are ready to Go!



## Let's GET READY!

Use these suggestions to get a team in place and start planning your kindergarten registration event.

Task	Examples and Tips
Form a team to plan and implement the kindergarten registration event.	Include a range of perspectives: Head Start educators, receiving school teachers, support professionals, parents, and other community members.
Select a team leader and schedule meetings.	Successful teams meet regularly. Consider monthly meetings to keep plans moving, resolve any challenges that arise, and to keep team members in the know.
Discuss methods to maximize attendance and participation.	<p>Consider the best time and location for families in your community.</p> <p>Advertise to raise awareness of the event.</p> <p>Provide child care.</p> <p>Provide snacks or hold a potluck.</p> <p>Support transportation access to the event.</p>
Clarify goals for the kindergarten registration event and make sure they are <i>measurable</i> .	<p>By the end of the event...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A specific percentage of Head Start graduates will be registered for kindergarten.</li> <li>• A specific percentage of families will know the location of their local elementary school.</li> </ul>
Discuss possible topics to address at the kindergarten registration event.	<p>Elementary School Registration Process.</p> <p>District Boundaries.</p> <p>Age of Kindergarten Entry.</p> <p>Immunizations.</p> <p>Parent Involvement (PTA, classroom volunteering, fieldtrip chaperoning, snacks preparation, etc.).</p>
Discuss the kindergarten registration event schedule.	<p>After a 15-minute meet and greet, the planning team leader will welcome the participants.</p> <p>Presentation from Head Start staff.</p> <p>Presentation from K-12 staff.</p> <p>Panel with K-12 staff and Head Start staff to answer questions.</p>
Identify important attendees and possible speakers or facilitators.	Early Childhood Educator, Special Education Teacher, Local K-12 principal, district early learning coordinators, PTA president, and other partners.
Assign roles for the kindergarten registration event.	<p>Is child care needed? If so, who will provide care?</p> <p>Who will set up the event? Clean up?</p> <p>Who will greet arriving families?</p> <p>Who will provide interpretation services, as needed?</p>
Arrange and confirm location, day, and time.	Head Start Center, elementary school, local community center, YMCA.

## Next, We GET SET!

Use these suggestions to start implementing the ideas from your planning phase, assign tasks, and raise public awareness of your kindergarten registration event.

Task	Examples and Tips
State your measurable goals for the kindergarten registration event.	<p>We expect that ___% of children graduating will register for kindergarten at our event.</p> <p>Attendance at the kindergarten registration event will include ___% of the families of transitioning children.</p>
Establish the schedule and activities. Align activities with goals.	<p>15-minute meet-and-greet.</p> <p>Presentation from Head Start staff.</p> <p>Presentation from K-12 staff.</p> <p>Teacher panels from both settings.</p> <p>Stations with event personnel assisting families with relevant forms.</p>
Assign personnel to the scheduled activities.	<p>Head Start educators and elementary school teachers, in pairs, welcome families at the door.</p> <p>Offer a formal welcome in languages representative of the audience.</p>
Advertise the kindergarten registration event.	<p>Post flyers in Head Start program, elementary schools, local community center, YMCA, library, places of worship, local supermarkets, and coffee shops.</p> <p>Post information on Facebook groups and local Blogs.</p> <p>Request inclusion in nonprofit twitter feeds.</p> <p>Develop flyers and posts in languages represented in the community.</p>
Invite participants. Customize invitations as needed.	<p>Personal invitation, support to arrange and coordinate carpools, offer in multiple languages.</p>
Make sure interpreters are available.	<p>Interpreters from Head Start program, elementary school, and additional local organizations are part of the transition planning committee and attend the event.</p>
Gather important resources. Make new resources as needed. Translate resources as needed.	<p>Resource packets are distributed to the planning team, which reviews existing materials and identifies what needs to be developed and what needs to be translated.</p>
Gather local maps and transportation information.	<p>Hard copies of district maps, neighborhood school(s) maps, and information about transportation to and from school are available and prepared and ready for families to take home after the event.</p>
Gather district and neighborhood school calendars. Translate into home languages, if needed.	<p>District calendars are available at tables, and staff distribute calendars to families accordingly (in the language spoken at home).</p>
Gather information about additional transition-related events and include them on annual calendars.	<p>Year-long transition calendar lists playgroups, library events, K-12 curriculum nights, multicultural nights, and talent shows.</p>

# Last, it's Time to GO!

Host your event and reflect on strengths and ideas for improvement.

Task	Examples and Tips	Yes/No
Effective planning steps and actions set us up for a successful kindergarten registration event.	Review the planning steps above to see what was effective and what could be improved upon.	
We advertised the event effectively.	Posts and flyers were well-dispersed and made available in the languages represented in our community.	
Our location, day, and time worked well for families.	We asked for feedback during the registration event about its accessibility and got mostly positive feedback.	
We achieved high attendance.	Invitations were delivered and received, our day and time worked well for families, services such as child care and transportation support were useful.	
We provided interpreters.	Interpreters were helpful, and represented the languages spoken by families.	
Food and child care were available.	Parents, center staff, and community members brought food for a potluck. Child care providers were present and cared well for the children.	
All families received a warm welcome in their home languages.	We had activities to participate in right away, and rolling arrivals were also greeted promptly. Some Head Start and elementary educator pairs remained at the door to welcome late arrivals.	
Families got a schedule, letting them know the event activities and when it would end.	Registration night scavenger hunt was designed to align with completing event activities. We awarded elementary school merchandise (a school water bottle, t-shirt, sticker) for a completed ticket.	
We kept to our agenda items and timing schedule, and it was a positive experience for us and the families.	Warm welcome in multiple languages, representative of audience. 15-minute meet-and-greet. Presentation from Head Start staff. Presentation from K-12 staff. Panel with teachers from both settings. Stations with event personnel assisting families with relevant forms. Departure and answer parting questions.	

Task	Examples and Tips	Yes/No
We had effective speakers and facilitators.	The speakers and facilitators we chose were engaging and provided useful information to participants.	
We provided workstations with guides so that forms could be completed on-site.	Staff were stationed at predetermined tables so that every family could find a friendly and welcoming face.	
The roles for the event and the people assigned to those roles worked well.	All roles were necessary, and the individuals assigned to the roles felt it was a good match for their available time and skills.	
Important resources related to a child's transition from a Head Start program to their receiving school were available.	Existing materials on the topic of transition to kindergarten were available and helpful. The materials we decided to produce were prepared and available in multiple languages.	
We distributed maps and transportation information at the event.	District and neighborhood school maps as well as transportation information were translated and distributed.	
District and neighborhood school calendars were distributed at the event.	Information about other transition-related events were added to the calendar, and this document was translated as needed.	
We offered information and materials in multiple formats.	Flyers, handouts, and media posts had written information as well as clear, full-color pictures.	
During departure, families had a chance to ask questions and check their work.	Head Start and elementary school educators, in pairs, reviewed forms and saw families off at the door.	
We followed up with a card, email, call, or conversation. We invited additional questions and asked if there were any concerns.	Staff conducted hallway walks when families were at our Head Start program for pick-up or drop off. We had materials available from registration night and asked families if they had any follow-up questions or concerns.	
We assessed our measurable goals.	What percentage of families of the children graduating from the Head Start program attended the event? How many children were registered for kindergarten at the event? How many children were registered for kindergarten in the weeks after the event?	

# Ideas For Next Time

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