Here are a few guidelines to help you determine if your child is socially, emotionally, and physically ready to participate in a structured educational program with a group of children.

- **Is your child learning independent life skills?**
  Examples include washing hands, brushing teeth, and being potty trained. He should be able to eat without much help. And he’ll need to be comfortable napping in a new place without you.

- **Can he or she work on projects on their own?**
  If your child likes to sit by himself and read books, work on drawings, or build with blocks, for example, he’s probably ready to concentrate on these kinds of tasks in preschool.

- **Is he or she ready to participate in group activities?**
  Listening to stories, singing songs, and playing together as a group takes some practice for young children. Signing your child up for a class may help prepare him for group play and circle time activities in preschool.

- **Has he or she spent time away from you?**
  If your child does not have much practice being away from you, try to schedule some in advance.

- **Do you think he’s ready?**
  Trust your instincts. If you think your child could use some new challenges and that he’s ready to interact with some new children, chances are he is. You know your child best and will be the best judge of whether or not he’s ready for the added stimulation of preschool.

Your preschool will guide you, but here are some items you may need to send to school with your child:

- Backpack or book bag
- Safety scissors
- Watercolors
- Lunchbox
- Plastic folder with 2 pockets
- Zipper-lock plastic bags (quart-size box)
- Washable markers
- Colored pencils

© 1999-2008 Kraft Foods. All Rights Reserved.