

Kindergarten Readiness Challenge

A Community Assessment Tool
for Idaho Public Libraries

Created by the Idaho Commission for Libraries (August 2019)



Introduction

As you may know, Idaho currently has no state funding for preschool education, and decades of Idaho Reading Indicator data show that almost half of Idaho children are not prepared for kindergarten. In communities across our state, quality preschools are hard to find or may be unaffordable for many families. The Idaho Commission for Libraries believes that Idaho libraries have a role to play in filling the preschool gap and addressing the issue of kindergarten readiness in their communities. This workbook will take you through a series of activities to get a clearer picture of kindergarten readiness in your community and will help you build a plan for your library to partner with schools and organizations to improve outcomes for 4-year-olds in your community.

How It Works

This workbook has five parts. You can print it out and work through the activities by hand, or download an electronic copy and fill it in on your computer (or both!).



Part 1 focuses on the needs of the families in your community and what, if any, needs are going unmet. The activities in this section require you to visit different websites to gather data about the people in your community.



Part 2 helps you build relationships with the schools in your community and learn more about their needs. This will require interviews with different teachers and administrative professionals. In-person interviews are ideal, but some interviews may need to be conducted via email or over the phone. Sample emails and interview templates are provided to help get you started.



Part 3 helps identify organizational assets in your community and create a list of potential partners. It will provide tools and templates to help gather data and conduct interviews similar to those you did with the schools.



Part 4 assesses the capacity of your library to address school readiness in your community by inventorying all of the ways that your library helps 4-year-olds prepare for kindergarten.



Part 5, analyzes and synthesizes information gathered in the previous parts of the workbook. You will write about what you have learned and help create a plan for your library to address the issue of kindergarten readiness in your community.

Toolkit Key:



Each part of the workbook is delineated by a specific icon (as illustrated above) which correlates to the topic at hand. Keep an eye out for the “Deep Dive” icon noted in some parts of the workbook which make suggestions for additional research, actions, or collaborative work within that topic.

If you need help along the way, please contact Staci Shaw, Youth Services Consultant, at the Idaho Commission for Libraries: email staci.shaw@libraries.idaho.gov or call 208-639-4178.



Part 1: Assessing the Community/Family Needs

Goal: To gather relevant community data to determine what, if any, school readiness needs are going unmet.

The first step in the Kindergarten Readiness Challenge is to gain an accurate picture of the people that make up your community. How many families with young/Kindergarten-age children? What financial and educational challenges do they face? What languages do they speak? What is their socioeconomic status? The library, or another local organization like the chamber of commerce, may already have a lot of this information packaged. First, determine if there is previous work to leverage. Keep in mind that it might not be up-to-date or comprehensive.

General Community Data:

What does your community look like at a glance?

Consider these sources as well as your own local sources:

“American Fact Finder” by the U.S. Census (2010) - <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>— Enter town/city name and state. (Find this information under either the “2010 Census: General Population” or the “2017 American Community Survey” - the most recent Census information).

“Population” Tab: Total Population (by county, city or zip code)

Number of children ages 0-5 currently in your community?

Community Data Focused on Financial Factors:

What impact might poverty or low-income employment have on your community?

Consider these sources as well as your own local sources:

From the Annie E. Casey Foundation’s *Kids Count Data Center* - Find the “Child Well-Being Indicators” (by county) - <https://datacenter.kidscount.org/data#ID/5/0/char/0>: From the “Locations” drop-down menu, select “Idaho,” then select “By County” and review the data within the following indicators:

1) Under “Employment & Income” - Percentage of single working mothers

2) Under “Public Assistance” - Number of children ages 0-4 on food stamps

3) Under “Poverty” - Percentage of children ages 0-5 who are below 100% of Federal Poverty Level (FPL)

4) Under “Health Insurance” - Number of Medicaid participants ages 0-5

5) Under “Early Childhood” - Percentage of children ages 3-4 not enrolled in any type of school



Community Data Focused on Financial Factors (continued):

Review the “Food Insecurity” data for your county by contacting your local foodbank, food pantry, non-profit organization, or search the Idaho Foodbank website at: <https://idahofoodbank.org/about/food-insecurity-in-idaho/>. Scroll down to the “Map the Meal Gap” section and find two options:

- 1) “Idaho 2019 Food Insecurity by County Data PDF” (overall)
- 2) “Idaho 2019 Child Food Insecurity by County Data PDF” (children)

Learn about your county’s household data by reviewing United Way of Idaho’s ALICE (Asset-Limited, Income-Constrained, Employed) Report for your county for a high-level overview <https://www.unitedwaytv.org/alice-report>.

Download and review the report titled “2018 Idaho Data by County” and then scroll to your county’s 2-page report (listed in alphabetical order).

Notes:

Questions to Consider:

- Did you learn anything new about your community through this data collection activity?
- How do you think ALICE data correlates to kindergarten readiness?
- Do you feel your library staff are aware of/educated about ALICE families, or is library staff training needed?
- Did any of the financial data in this section surprise you? What stood out to you?



Community Data on Specific Sub-Populations:

What is the racial/ethnic/cultural make-up of your community?

Consider these sources as well as your own local sources:

“American Fact Finder” by the U.S. Census (2010) - <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>

Idaho Commission on Hispanic Affairs (See “The Hispanic Profile Data Book for Idaho” – 4th Edition): [https://icha.idaho.gov/docs/Hispanic%20Profile%20Data%20Book%202017%20-%20FINAL%20\(2%2023%2017\).pdf](https://icha.idaho.gov/docs/Hispanic%20Profile%20Data%20Book%202017%20-%20FINAL%20(2%2023%2017).pdf)

Notes:

Consider:

How do you think this racial/ethnic/cultural data correlates to kindergarten readiness?



******Ready for a Deep Dive?***

Contact the [Agency for New Americans](#) or [Idaho Office for Refugees](#) and find out if your community houses refugees or New American families. If so, ask these offices about the status, needs, and assistance available for refugee families in your community. Are there gaps in service which the library could fill?

Contact the [Community Council of Idaho](#) and find out if your community houses migrant or seasonal families. If so, ask these offices about the status, needs and assistance available for migrant and seasonal families in your community. Are there gaps in service which the library could fill?

Contact any area American Indian tribes via their tribal website and find out how you might partner with the tribal library or other departments. Reach out and ask these offices about the status, needs and assistance available for families in your community. Are there gaps in service which the library could fill?

Notes:



Education-Related Community Data:

What does a snapshot of your local elementary school/s look like? What are their struggles?

Using <http://idahoschools.org>, look up the school profile for each elementary school in your library service area and fill in the data table below (make copies of this table as needed). The “About Us” tab will provide a good overview of the make-up of the student population. On the home page of this website, enter a school name in the “Jump Right to Your School” space to get started.

Note: Currently the “Financial” tab of the school profiles is a work in progress and is estimated to be available in January of 2020. You can find current Free and Reduced Lunch statistics, by district and school, here: <https://apps.sde.idaho.gov/CnpEligibility/Report>

School #1:	School #2:	School #3:
___ % Free and Reduced Lunch	___ % Free and Reduced Lunch	___ % Free and Reduced Lunch
___ % Military families	___ % Military families	___ % Military families
___ % Migrant families	___ % Migrant families	___ % Migrant families
___ % English Language Learners	___ % English Language Learners	___ % English Language Learners
___ % Homeless students	___ % Homeless students	___ % Homeless students
___ % Students with disabilities	___ % Students with disabilities	___ % Students with disabilities
___ % Foster care students	___ % Foster care students	___ % Foster care students

Note: Within the Idaho Schools site, if you see an “N*” where the data should be, this means the data has been intentionally suppressed to protect individual identities at that school as the numbers are too low.



*****Ready for a Deep Dive?**

Review the “Academic Indicators” and “Non-Academic Indicators” tabs on each school profile as well and make notes in the “Notes” section below.

Notes



Preschool-Specific Community Data:

As you learn more about preschools in your community, the following definitions may be useful:

Childcare/Daycare/In-home Care: These are facilities that children attend regularly and are supervised with their basic needs being met while their parents are unavailable.

Licensed Daycare: In Idaho, childcare centers that provide care for seven or more children must be licensed.

Preschool: A childcare facility that focuses on helping children develop early learning skills according to a curriculum. May be accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) or working through the [Steps to Quality](https://idahostars.org/Child-Care-Providers/Steps-to-Quality) with Idaho AEYC (IdahoSTARS): <https://idahostars.org/Child-Care-Providers/Steps-to-Quality>.

Idaho Child Care Assistance Program (ICCP): A program that provides child care assistance to low-income working families by paying for a portion of child care.

Head Start: A program of the United States Department of Health and Human Services that provides comprehensive early childhood education, health, nutrition, and parent involvement services to low-income children and their families.

Developmental Preschool/Early Childhood Special Education: A school district preschool program for children who have been identified as having a developmental delay or hearing/vision impairment. Not every school district offers this type of program.

What do current preschool opportunities look like in your community?

Consider the following:

- How many licensed child care providers are your area/community?
Idaho STARS website: <https://idahostars.org/Parents/Licensing-Parents> - Select “Parents/Choosing Quality Child Care/Step 1. Find green “Search for Child Care” button and select a city/town.
Or call the Idaho STARS hotline at: 211 or 1-800-926-258
Or contact a Regional Idaho STARS Office: <https://idahostars.org/Child-Care-Providers/CCRC/CCRC-Regions>
- Are Head Start and Early Head Start programs available in your community? <https://www.idahohsa.org/>
Look under “Find a Program” button.
- Is Migrant Seasonal Head Start also offered nearby? <https://communitycouncilofidaho.org/head-start/>

Make contact with several child care providers in your area, including Head Start and Early Head Start if applicable, and discuss/note the information outlined in the table on the next page: (Contact as many providers as you can or, depending on the size of your service area, contact at least 3 providers and take an average as applicable.)



Preschool-Specific Community Data:

Provider #1:	Provider #2:	Provider #3:
# ____ children total they can serve—i.e. capacity	# ____ children total they can serve—i.e. capacity	# ____ children total they can serve—i.e. capacity
# ____ children on waiting list	# ____ children on waiting list	# ____ children on waiting list
# ____ avg wait-time on waiting list	# ____ avg wait-time on waiting list	# ____ avg wait-time on waiting list
\$ ____ avg full-time monthly cost	\$ ____ avg full-time monthly cost	\$ ____ avg full-time monthly cost
\$ ____ avg part-time monthly cost	\$ ____ avg part-time monthly cost	\$ ____ avg part-time monthly cost
Y/N Accepts ICCP?	Y/N Accepts ICCP?	Y/N Accepts ICCP?
# ____ Quality Step Rating	# ____ Quality Step Rating	# ____ Quality Step Rating



***Ready for a Deep Dive?

What does high-quality child care look like and why is it important? (from IdahoSTARS, QRIS)

High-quality child care helps children enter school ready to succeed. These programs have:

- Nurturing and supportive relationships between adults and children
- Care and education that meets each student’s individual needs
- Facilities that are safe, well-organized and have age-appropriate resources
- Activities that support the development of the whole child
- Open communication and genuine engagement with families
- Meaningful efforts to embrace diversity

High-quality programs should use the **Idaho Early Learning e-Guidelines** as a reference for establishing their

Number of high-quality, licensed child care providers in your community: # _____

Notes:

Consider:

- How does the total # of child care/preschool spots available in your community compare to the total # of preschool-age children in your community?
- How does the average monthly cost of child care/preschool in your community compare to the average monthly income in your community?



Preschool-Specific Community Data: (Continued)



****Ready for a Deep Dive?*

Gather formal or informal data from the parents/families/caregivers in your area about preschool — i.e. what barriers do they experience that prevent them from accessing high-quality preschool programming? How do they think the public library could help address these barriers? Consider staging staff outside of your children's storytime program area or in various locations around town to ask parents/caregivers directly. Alternatively, consider incentivizing a more formal paper or electronic survey to ask these same questions. Could you give a coupon for a free book to every parent of young children who completes the survey?

Notes:

Formal/Informal Survey results:

Synthesize Your Data

Notes:

Consider:

- What was most eye-opening for you regarding the availability/affordability/accessibility of quality child care for families in your community?
- Do you see any ways your library and a partner could address one or more of these factors?



PART 2: UNDERSTANDING THE NEEDS OF SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL LIBRARIES

Goal: Build relationships between public libraries and schools and gain understanding of school needs in terms of kindergarten readiness.

BUILDING A CONTACT LIST

To gain an accurate picture of the schools in your community and their needs, libraries should reach out to the following people at nearby elementary schools:

- School librarians
- Kindergarten teachers
- Reading specialists
- Administrators

Next Steps:

- 1) Begin with gathering relevant contact information for each school in your library service areas — see the School Contact Info Template on pg. 10. Make as many copies of this page as you need.
- 2) After you have gathered the contact information, proceed with an initial email or phone call to introduce yourself and request either an in-person or a phone interview—see the Making Connections Introductory Emails on pg. 11. Customize these emails as needed.
- 3) Conduct a school interview with one or more teachers or administrators at each school you may partner with in your community. See pg. 12 for School Interview Questionnaire template aimed at teachers and pg. 13 for School Interview Questionnaire template aimed at Principals/Administrators.
- 4) Synthesize all the data you have gathered in Part 1 and during your school interviews in Part 2, and create a Needs Statement (also called a Problem Statement). See pg. 14 for a Needs Statement overview and pg. 15 for a Needs Statement outline and prompting questions.

Notes:



School Contact Info Template

(make copies as needed)

School Name : _____

School District: _____

School Address: _____

School Librarian

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____ Best times to contact: _____

Notes: (i.e. Does this person have the capacity to be a partner?)

Kindergarten Teacher

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____ Best times to contact: _____

Notes:

Kindergarten Teacher II

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____ Best times to contact: _____

Notes:

Reading Specialist

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____ Best times to contact: _____

Notes:

Administrator/Principal

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____ Best times to contact: _____

Notes:

Other:

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____ Best times to contact: _____

Notes:



Making Connections

Introductory emails

A relationship with a representative of the local elementary school (or schools) is essential. Call or email to set up a meeting with kindergarten teachers, the school librarian, and the principal of the school. Ask for 20-30 minutes of their time for an information-gathering interview. The interview can be conducted in person or over the phone. The sample email language below may be helpful to get the process started. When the meeting is booked, you might use the interview questionnaire on the following two pages to get the conversation started.

Sample email 1: Dear [Kindergarten Teacher's Name],

[Name of public library] is focusing on how to support school readiness for the children in our area. We understand that many children are entering school without the skills they need to succeed in Kindergarten. We are eager to learn about the specifics of Kindergarten Readiness and would appreciate your expertise on what is needed. Your input will make it possible for the library to design a program that will help those kids who are not ready to start school learn the skills that will help them succeed when they get to your class.

Do you have about 30 minutes in your schedule in the next two weeks to meet to discuss this project?

Thank you for considering, [insert Signature block]

Sample email 2: Dear [School Principal's Name],

At [name of public library] we are aware that children entering Kindergarten may not have had high-quality preschool experiences and often enter school without the skills they need to succeed. The library is in the planning stages of developing a program that focuses on supporting school readiness, and input from you and your faculty is essential. We want to develop a kindergarten readiness program that will properly prepare students and their adults for Kindergarten at [name of elementary school]. Would you please help us by contributing your expertise?

Are you available for a meeting next week? We could meet at your school or over the phone.

Thank you for considering, [insert Signature block]

Sample email 3: Dear [School Librarian's Name],

At [Name of Public Library], we understand that students entering Kindergarten may not have had high-quality preschool experiences and often don't have the skills they need to be successful in school. The public library is planning a program to help kids learn the skills they need to be successful in Kindergarten, and we hope [name of elementary school] will partner with us to help make it successful and effective. We know that by working together, we can both help our students be ready to learn when they enroll in Kindergarten.

Are you available to meet next week to talk about the possibility of partnering and what our roles might be? I can meet at the school, or we can meet here at the public library.

Thank you for considering, [insert Signature Block]



School Interview Questionnaire—Teacher Focused

Can you tell me about any trends or changes in the percentage of children entering kindergarten at benchmark (proficient) levels?

[Note: If you have determined that the school uses a kindergarten screener, request a copy of this tool and ask the following questions:] Let's talk about the results of your kindergarten screener from previous kindergarten registration – of those who enrolled in kindergarten, how many were identified as needing additional support based on their screener performance? What specific skills were identified as an area of need for the incoming kindergartners.

What unique needs/gaps/challenges are found at this elementary school?

Tell us about preschool opportunities offered in your area. Do you feel these preschool opportunities are meeting the needs of families in your area? Is there enough capacity? What impact do you feel they are having on school readiness?

Does the school or school district offer any outreach efforts for children ages 3-5 (not yet enrolled in school; not including developmental preschool) to help prepare children for school? (i.e. Kindergarten Roundup program, Jump Start Kindergarten at Kindergarten Registration, Ready for Kindergarten program)

What are the top 3 skills kindergarten staff notice incoming kindergartner's lack?

What are some ways you feel our library could help meet the needs of preschool children in our community?

How might we partner with your school to help more children become kindergarten-ready?

If funding were available, what projects or resources might we provide to help children increase Kindergarten-readiness skills?

School Interview Questionnaire— Principal/Admin focused



What are your district policies around partnering with outside organizations?

What are the top 3 skills kindergarten staff notice incoming kindergartner's lack?

What are some ways you feel our library could help meet the needs of preschool children in our community?

How might we partner with your school to help more children become kindergarten-ready?

From your interaction with parents, what are some suggestions about the best places to reach out to PreK families?

What child care facilities serve the families in your school?

From what sources does your school district collect data about incoming kindergarteners?

What are some ways you feel our library could help meet the needs of preschool children in our community?

How might we partner with your school to help more children become kindergarten-ready?

If funding were available, what projects or resources might we provide to help children increase kindergarten-readiness skills?

If we were to do a project together, how could we use data to measure impact?



SYNTHESIZE YOUR DATA INTO A NEEDS STATEMENT

Next Step:

Summarize the collected data into an effective Needs Statement. The Needs Statement will summarize what you have learned about that status of kindergarten readiness in your community. In addition, creating a succinct Needs Statement now will be useful later when your library applies for ICfL's Kindergarten Readiness Grant or other grant funding.

Needs Statement Overview:

(Based on: *Technical Grant Writing* article by GrantsEdge: <https://www.grantsedge.com/needs-statement/> (04-21-17)

A needs statement establishes the rationale for a project by clearly identifying the gap or problem within a specific community. A needs statement should determine the focus an organization will take by addressing the particular needs of a specific target audience through a very distinct project. The needs statement should also explain to a funder what the community requires or what it is lacking and defines the underlying issues the applicant is addressing. Ultimately, the needs statement should answer the questions, "What is the problem or need?" and "How do you know it's a problem?"

Consider including the following four components in your Needs Statement:

Focus on the main issue - It almost goes without saying that your community likely has a variety of concerns and issues it needs to confront. It may also be a fact that your program is tied to more than one specific problem. However, it is important that your needs statement focuses on a central concern, and not the issues on the periphery.

Use data and comparative statistics - The use of quantitative information, made up of the most recent, relevant, and local data you can find, provides an overview and snapshot of your community. Numbers, data, and statistics can paint a picture and tell an important part of the story in underlying the need for your specific solution.

Connect with the heart - As much as funders want reliable data and concrete logic in a needs statement, they are also human beings with authentic emotions. Make sure a funder understands the reality of the situation and how the problem in the community is impacting real people. Make it legitimate by telling a story or two.

Highlight the hurdles - In your writing, leave some room in the overall statement to describe the gap that exists between the current state of the community and what the community would be in the future if solutions were implemented. You might also take the opportunity to feature some of the barriers that have prevented resolution of the problem in the past.

Before you begin your own Needs Statement, consider the following example Needs Statements submitted by Idaho libraries for ICfL's Kindergarten Readiness Grant. Note: these examples do not include a personal story or an "emotional hook." It is recommended that you aim to include such a story or emotional hook in your Needs Statement if possible:

<https://libraries.idaho.gov/rtm/kinder-grant/>
(see "Resources and Examples" tab)



Needs Statement /Problem Statement Outline

What is the problem or need? Use supporting data.

How do you know it's a problem?

What's your emotional hook? Tell a story.

Describe the barriers or hurdles of this problem/need.

Briefly describe your organization's planned approach to this problem/need. How is your library poised to address this need? (Note: More solution/program planning will occur in Part 5 of this workbook.)



Part 3: Mapping Community Assets

Goal: Identify potential partners with aligned interests in supporting kindergarten readiness.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH HUMAN SERVICES ORGANIZATIONS/AGENCIES/ASSOCIATIONS

Scan through the list on the page 18 and think of the connections your library currently has with other organizations who serve children and families. Assess your current levels of relationships for the following partner types/groups:

(Based on the [Engaged Library Toolkit](#) from the Chicago Public Library)

Our library has relationships with:	Not at all		Some		A Great Deal
Schools/Schools Districts/Homeschool Groups/Preschools etc. Describe the relationship:	1	2	3	4	5
Social Service Agencies Describe:	1	2	3	4	5
Out-of-School Organizations Describe:	1	2	3	4	5
Cultural Heritage Groups Describe:	1	2	3	4	5
Elderly Groups/Agencies Describe:	1	2	3	4	5
Family Support Groups Describe:	1	2	3	4	5
Faith-Based Groups Describe:	1	2	3	4	5
Health-Related Describe:	1	2	3	4	5
Fraternal/Sororal Groups Describe:	1	2	3	4	5
Union Groups and Agricultural Associations Describe:	1	2	3	4	5



Our library has relationships with:	Not at all		Some		A Great Deal
Public Safety Describe:	1	2	3	4	5
Foundations/Museums/Non-Profits Describe:	1	2	3	4	5
Media Describe:	1	2	3	4	5
Local Businesses/Bus. Associations Describe:	1	2	3	4	5
City/County Government/Local Government Describe:	1	2	3	4	5
Other organizations or Individuals Describe:	1	2	3	4	5



SOME EXAMPLES OF POTENTIAL PARTNERS

This is by no means an exhaustive list, but rather some ideas to help you brainstorm potential partners in your community.

- Schools/Education
 - Local schools
 - School Districts
 - Preschools/Daycares
 - Colleges/Universities
 - Homeschool Groups
 - Other Schools
 - Sports Teams
- Social Services Agencies:
 - WIC
 - Food Banks/ Pantries
 - Health and Welfare offices
 - Agency for New Americans
 - Idaho Housing and Finance Authority
 - Home Visiting Agencies
 - Developmental or Disability Agencies
- Out-of-School Organizations:
 - Boys and Girls Clubs
 - YMCA
 - Community Centers
 - 4-H
 - Boy/Girl Scouts
- Charitable Groups:
 - Local United Way
 - Homeless Shelters and Organizations
 - Assistance League
 - Book-It-Forward
 - Family Advocates
 - Local Auxiliary Groups
 - Big Brothers/ Big Sisters
 - Rotary Clubs
- Cultural/Heritage Groups:
 - Community Council of Idaho
 - Tribal Councils
 - Euzkaldunak or other Basque Associations
 - Global Lounge
- Elderly Groups/ Agencies:
 - Seniors Clubs
 - Local AARP
 - Foster Grandparents
 - Senior Corps
- Family Support Groups:
 - Women's and Children's Alliance (or other protective groups)
 - Teen Parent Groups
 - Foster Parents' Support Groups and Organizations
- Grandfamilies
 - Idaho Parents Unlimited
 - La Leche League or other nursing support groups
 - Idaho Children's Trust Fund
- Faith-Based Groups:
 - Churches/ Mosques/ Synagogues
 - Salvation Army/Deseret/St. Vincent DePaul's/ Catholic Charities
 - Local religious groups
- Health-Related:
 - Clinics
 - Hospitals
 - Dentists
 - Reach Out and Read
- Fraternal/Sororal Groups, Men's/Women's Clubs:
 - El Korah Shriners
 - Elks
 - Daughters of...
 - Non-collegiate sororities/fraternities
 - Modern Woodmen
- Union Groups and Agricultural Associations:
 - Dairyman's Association
 - Local AFL-CIO (strong supporters of early education)
 - Teachers' Unions
 - List of Agricultural Assoc. in Idaho: Google "Idaho Ag Directory" PDF
- Public Safety:
 - Police/Sheriff
 - Firefighters
 - Correctional Facilities
 - Judges/courts
- Foundations:
 - Museums:
 - Non-Profits:
 - Media:
- Local Businesses
- Business Associations
- Banks/Credit Unions
- Chamber of Commerce
- Public/Private Transpiration
- City/County Government
- Other local Government Agencies
- Housing Developments
- Other Organizations & Individuals



Gather Data About Potential Partners

From your table of partnership relationships on pgs. 16-17, choose 5 – 8 existing and potential partners to begin or continue exploring. Locate relevant information about partner—see pg. 20 for the “Potential Partners Template” (make as many copies of this as needed). Has the library worked with them in the past? In what capacity? Which partnership are you most excited to work on? Which partnership do you feel will be the most challenging and why?

Once you have gathered the partner information, prepare a custom partner interview questionnaire and arrange an in-person partner meeting with 2-3 potential partners from your list. Consider the following possible interview questions:

Partner Interview Questionnaire

Discuss how your library’s mission, values, and goals align with the partner’s mission, values, and goals.

What is your organization already doing to help children get ready for kindergarten?

What are your biggest challenges or barriers to reaching or serving children ages 3—5?

How might a partnership with the library help eliminate or address these barriers?

Do you have any big events or promotions that the library could partner with by attending/participating?

My library can offer your organization _____(bring something to the table—a resource/an outreach event/a presentation, etc). Do you think this would be a good way for us to begin/continue partnering?

Who is the best contact at this organization and what is the best way to communicate?

Potential Partners Template (make copies as needed)



Name of Organization _____
Contact at Organization: _____ Phone Number _____
Email _____
Address of Organization _____
Mission of Organization _____
Has your library worked with them in the past? Y N
In what capacity?

Name of Organization _____
Contact at Organization: _____ Phone Number _____
Email _____
Address of Organization _____
Mission of Organization _____
Has your library worked with them in the past? Y N
In what capacity?

Name of Organization _____
Contact at Organization: _____ Phone Number _____
Email _____
Address of Organization _____
Mission of Organization _____
Has your library worked with them in the past? Y N
In what capacity?

Name of Organization _____
Contact at Organization: _____ Phone Number _____
Email _____
Address of Organization _____
Mission of Organization _____
Has your library worked with them in the past? Y N
In what capacity?

Name of Organization _____
Contact at Organization: _____ Phone Number _____
Email _____
Address of Organization _____
Mission of Organization _____
Has your library worked with them in the past? Y N
In what capacity?



Part 4: Assess Library Staff Capacity to Address Kindergarten Readiness Needs

Goal: Assess the library's current capabilities (staff, time, programs, resources) regarding kindergarten readiness.

Programs

What programs does your library offer that support kindergarten readiness? **Clickable checkboxes:**

Weekly enhanced storytimes*

Early STEM programs

Parenting classes

Early literacy workshops/classes

Outreach activities

Presentations or Storytimes outside the library

Library card promotion outside the library

Other (describe):

Resources

What resources does your library offer to support kindergarten readiness? **Clickable checkboxes:**

Parenting Books

Handouts, bookmarks, etc.

Take-home kits

Other (describe):



Library Staff Capacity (cont.)

Personnel/Staff Time

List any staff members whose duties support school readiness. List position title, how many hours/week your staff spend on activities that support kindergarten readiness and any special skills of each staff person (ex: Storytime: 1 hour prep; 45 minutes for program).

Staff Training

Describe the training that staff at your library have received to support kindergarten readiness in the following areas:

Early literacy

Early STEM

Social-Emotional Awareness/Executive Function

Other (describe)



Library Staff Capacity (cont.)

Materials

Consider what materials and equipment your library currently has to support early learning and kindergarten readiness. What material/equipment would you like to gain to support early learning and school readiness? (ex: Imaginative play area or rhythm instruments for storytime)

Current Materials/Equipment which support early learning/kindergarten readiness:

Wish List of Materials/Equipment which support early learning/kindergarten readiness:

Space & Facilities

Describe the space and/or facilities that your library uses to support early learning and kindergarten readiness. Consider facility space found elsewhere in your community that you currently use or may be able to use in the future.

In-House Space/Facilities which support early learning/kindergarten readiness:

Community/Partner Space/Facilities which support early learning/kindergarten readiness:



Library Staff Capacity (cont.)

Funding

What is your library's budget for supporting early learning and kindergarten readiness? List specific amounts and their purpose.

Do you have additional funding sources? Brainstorm future funding sources. (Describe below.)

Communication

How do you let your community know about your kindergarten readiness resources and programs? **Clickable boxes:**

Marketing materials

Social Media

Word of mouth

School partnerships

Other (describe)

What more could you/would you like to do to share library resources with your community?



Library Staff Capacity (cont.)

Strengths

What are your library's strengths in supporting early learning and kindergarten readiness?

Opportunities

How can your library improve its support of early learning and kindergarten readiness? What gaps do you see in your services or resources?



Part 5: Provide an overview of kindergarten readiness in your community

Goal: To identify existing resources in the community to provide school readiness activities for parents and caregivers of 3-5 year-olds; To identify gaps in existing resources and brainstorm ways the library and our partners can work to close those gaps.

Write about What You've Learned

Are most kids in your community ready for kindergarten? Describe their level of readiness.

What resources do families have to help their children get ready for kindergarten?

How can the library partner with other organizations to help kids in the community get ready for kindergarten?



What resources does the library need to help improve kindergarten readiness in the community?

What resources/classes/events are missing from your community to get children ready for kindergarten?



Challenge: Create a library plan to address Kindergarten Readiness in your community.

Before you begin work on your kindergarten readiness plan, review all the information you have gathered in this workbook, especially the Needs Statement. Once you have reviewed this information, you are ready to begin your plan! Your plan should: 1) address the gaps identified in your assessment, 2) demonstrate your relationship with school and community partners, 3) include goals for improving or increasing library resources which support early learning, 4) include a program assessment piece, and 5) include actionable next steps for your library and library staff.

“Kindergarten Readiness Plan”



“Kindergarten Readiness Plan” (continued)

To discuss your plan [questions, concerns, challenges, best practices] with an ICfL Youth Services Consultant, contact Staci Shaw at (208) 639-4178 or staci.shaw@libraries.idaho.gov.

To submit your Kindergarten Readiness Plan to ICfL, attach your completed plan and email it to Staci Shaw.