



Starting Strong Connection

Time to Pre-register your child for Kindergarten in Rapid City Area Schools

Rapid City Area School District has set the schedule for pre-registration screenings for children who will enter the school district as kindergarteners in the Fall of 2016.

If your child will be attending kindergarten you will need to call your respective home school **2 weeks** before the earliest pre-registration date listed below to set up an appointment for the screening. Plan for the screening to take approximately one hour. If you are not sure what your home school is you can go to the district website at rcas.org and click on School/busing Search button is on the left hand menu.

February 29	Pinedale
March 1	Pinedale
March 3 & 4	General Beadle
March 7, 8, 9	Black Hawk
March 10, 11	South Park
March 14, 15, 16	Meadowbrook
March 17, 18, 21, 22	Rapid Valley
March 23, 24	Wilson
March 30, 31	Robbinsdale
April 1	Robbinsdale
April 4, 5	South Canyon
April 7, 8	Canyon Lake
April 11,12,14	Corral Drive
April 15, 18, 19	Valley View
April 20(AM only)	Grandview
April 21,22	Grandview

April 25,26,28,29
May 2,3
May 4,5,6

Knollwood
Horace Mann
Kindergarten Pick-up Screenings at Jefferson

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What you will need to bring with you:

- Your Child
- An original certified copy of your child's birth certificate
- Immunization Records
- Social Security Card

This is for the pre-registration process. Your child's registration must be finalized on the regularly scheduled registration day in August (date has not been announced)

☺ Please remember to inform Early Childhood Connections of any changes in your address or contact information.

☺ If you plan to withdraw from the program please call Kim Booth at:
342-6464
or email at:
kimbooth@rushmore.com

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The Journey of Mixed Emotions— How to Help Your Child Have a Successful Morning

Do you struggle with stressful mornings? Do you often leave the house in an angry, frantic rush? Mornings can be a particularly challenging time for parents. Getting your entire family up and out the door is no easy task! It is important to understand that your morning routine serves as the foundation for your family's entire day. You can create a morning routine that not only helps your day to begin more smoothly, but also teaches your child important skills that he needs to become more independent and confident. A morning routine can also reduce challenging behaviors such as crying, whining and tantrums.

Morning Routine



Try This at Home

- Use a visual schedule with items such as photos, clipart, or objects that shows your child the steps in his morning routine. This visual schedule can help him to understand the expectations of the morning routine. To learn more about how to create a visual schedule, go to challengingbehaviors.org and search the site for "visual schedules" in the search box located in the upper right-hand corner of the screen.
- If your child has trouble waking up in the morning, it might be because he is not getting enough sleep at night. Set a consistent bedtime and stick with it. When a child's bedtime changes it can make it harder for him to wake up in the morning.
- Plan ahead. Use your bedtime routine to plan for the next day together.
 1. Lay out the clothes your child will wear.
 2. Pack his backpack
 3. Discuss the morning routine, show him pictures and talk about the day ahead.
- Give your child some power over his morning routine by offering reasonable choices. For example, "First, get dressed. Then, you get a choice! Would you like to have cereal or pancakes for breakfast?"
- Encourage your child. When your child completes a task and follows the routine, provide positive and specific encouragement. For example, say "Wow! You got up and got dressed all by yourself! Now we will have a few extra minutes to play. What a great way to start the day!"

The Bottom Line

A morning routine is a daily opportunity for you to build and nurture a positive relationship with your child. When you follow a repetitive morning routine you allow your child to gain practice with important skills such as dressing, bathing and grooming and give him a feeling of confidence and success. A calm, loving morning routine at home sets the tone for the entire day for both you and your child. (From Backpack Connection Series)

Growing Up Wild: Bird Watching with Preschoolers

- 1. Start in your own backyard.** Create a bird-friendly backyard so it becomes a place birds will want to visit. Hang bird feeders and have a bird-bath. Consider planting some native, bird-friendly plants.
- 2. Strike up a conversation.** "Talk" to your backyard birds. To do so, listen to the sounds they make, then try to mimic them. The kids think this is loads of fun.
- 3. Invest in a field guide.** Check out a few different guides to birds in our area from The Rapid City Public Library to find the one that's right for you. Then become familiar with birds that frequent our area.

4. Improve the view. Invest in a kid-friendly pair of binoculars to help bring the birds into closer view.

5. Create your own bird book. Keep track of what you see. Your bird book could include sketches or photos and a few simple facts about the birds you see often.



Child Development and Learning: Science and Nature/Making Bird Feeders

Pine cone bird feeder: One of the most common bird feeders for kids to make, the pine cone bird feeder is also one of the easiest. To make your pine cone bird feeder, gather up some pine cones and tie strings to the top of them. (Tip: do this step first, as the pine cones can get messy!) Using a butter knife, have your preschooler spread peanut butter or cooking lard (bacon grease) all over the surface. Roll the pine cone through a bowl of bird seed and then hang the pine cone from a high surface, such as a tree or a porch.

Bagel bird feeder: Along the same lines as the pine cone bird feeder, this one uses a stale bagel. Cut the bagel in half lengthwise and secure it with a string or ribbon. Have your preschooler spread either peanut butter or cooking fat over the bagel and then dredge it through the bird seed.

Cereal bird feeder: This is a great craft for working fine motor skills and makes use of any stale cereal you might have in the house. Take a long length of string and tie a knot at the end, big enough so the cereal can't drop through. Ask your preschooler to put circle-shaped cereal (such as Cheerios) onto the string. Once the string is full,

tie together at the ends and then secure to a tree or porch.

Toilet paper roll bird feeder: To make a toilet paper roll bird feeder, run a long piece of string through an empty toilet paper roll and tie together at the ends. Have your preschooler smear peanut butter all over the surface of the roll. Dredge through bird seed and hang your toilet paper roll bird feeder for all to see!



Starting Strong Program Partners

Early Childhood Connections
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Banana Bunch Children's Learning
Center

Fit-n-Fun Preschool

St. Elizabeth Seton Preschool

Dream Kids Preschool and Child Care

YMCA Zoo Crew Preschool

Westside Preschool



Watch for Upcoming Dates and Times for this annual
Starting Strong Family Event: From Preschool to Kindergarten!

Going to kindergarten is an important life event.

Preschoolers can feel excited—and a bit worried, too.

Families have similar feelings, knowing their child is going to the "Big School."

Come Join Us for an evening to explore what it feels like at the "Big School"

Dinner will be served in the school cafeteria so you and your child can go through the "lunch line."

Kindergarten teachers from the Rapid School District, St. Elizabeth Seton and Open Bible will be available to answer your questions about transitioning into school.

St. Elizabeth Seton Elementary at Terra Sancta
2101 City Springs Road
Rapid City, SD 57702

