



Should You Register Your Child for Kindergarten if They Have a Mid-Year Birthday?

Wondering if you should register your child for Kindergarten this year or next year? If you have a child with a birthday late into the year such as January or February, you could register them this year or next. But should you wait? BTW, the practice of waiting is called "Red Shirting."

The benefit of registering a child early is daycare savings, and the benefit of registering later is that the child is always in the older section of the class. This may be helpful when they are in junior high and grasping abstract concepts such as algebra ahead of their peers because they have had an extra year of pre-frontal core brain maturation. They can cognitively grasp concepts easier because their brains are developmentally a year older than their peers. As for physical size, especially for boys, another year of growth adds height in that very sensitive growth period between 13 and 14 years of age.

In my twenty years of teaching parent groups, both teachers and parents who have had to make this decision report that it is almost always better to wait. A child may be ready academically such as knowing colors, numbers and maybe even reading, but socially and emotionally, may still be immature. Executive function takes a big leap during the 3-5 years and again from 12-25 years and takings turns, sitting still in circle time, and refraining from hitting or pushing when frustrated, all require a certain amount of self-control. Can the child articulate her feelings? Does he have

the ability to put his needs on hold in order for the group to function? These skills help peer relations because nobody likes a line-butter, and it helps academic success in school, where so much success depends on appropriate social skills. You, as the primary educator; the parent, knows if the child has this level of social and emotional development? If so, he may be ready. If not, a year can make a huge difference in starting with success.

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