

# Countdown to Kindergarten

Countdown to Kindergarten engages families, educators and the community in a citywide effort to enhance early learning opportunities and to support successful transition into kindergarten.

Countdown's programs and activities create a **continuum of services that support families from birth through kindergarten entry**, including:



**Talk, Read, Play:** A citywide campaign that provides Boston families with children ages birth to five with information about child development milestones, activities to support growth and learning at home, and resources and events in the community.



Talk, Read, Play includes a Milestones guide (available in eight languages) and a dynamic website, [www.talkreadplay.org](http://www.talkreadplay.org), that features an up-to-date events calendar, downloadable versions of the Milestones guide and opportunities for parents to sign up to receive child development information through e-mail and cell phone text messages.

**Play to Learn Groups:** Play to Learn Groups offer free, weekly, structured playtimes for parents and their children ages one to three in Boston Public Schools elementary schools. The groups bring together parents, children and an early childhood professional to foster nurturing behaviors and model developmentally appropriate activities for parents to engage in with their young children. Parents in the groups find support from peers, as well as connections to vital services.

**Kindergarten Transition Activities:** As children near kindergarten age, all Boston families who are interested in attending the Boston Public Schools can take part in the many opportunities Countdown provides to support the transition into kindergarten, including:

- **“I’m Ready” DVD, Countdown to Kindergarten Information Sheets, Registration Guides and Readiness Activities** – materials designed to prepare families for kindergarten
- **School Preview Time** – opportunities to visit schools and learn about how to choose and then register for school
- **School Welcome Sessions** – opportunities for families to explore their newly assigned school and receive a “Counting Down to Kindergarten” Readiness Guide
- **Neighborhood Kindergarten Days** – celebrations held at neighborhood Boston Public Library branches for children and families entering kindergarten
- **Annual Kindergarten Celebration at the Boston Children’s Museum** – Boston’s citywide celebration where children have the opportunity to meet teachers, sample typical kindergarten activities, climb on board a real school bus, and receive free health screenings.

For more information, visit [www.countdowntokindergarten.org](http://www.countdowntokindergarten.org) or contact Sonia Gomez-Banrey, Director, at [sgomezbanrey@boston.k12.ma.us](mailto:sgomezbanrey@boston.k12.ma.us) or 617-635-6816.

Countdown to Kindergarten is a unique collaboration among the Boston Public Schools, the Office of Mayor Thomas M. Menino and more than two dozen public and private organizations.

