

NC Integrated Care for Kids (NC InCK): Overview of the Kindergarten Readiness Promotion Bundle

What is the NC InCK Kindergarten Readiness Promotion Bundle?

The Kindergarten Readiness Promotion Bundle is a set of interventions that primary care providers often already employ to help promote kindergarten readiness. The actions included in the bundle are delivered from birth to age 6 and promote the five domains included in North Carolina's definition of kindergarten readiness: health and physical development, social and emotional development, language and communication development, cognition and general knowledge, and approaches toward learning.

Why was the Kindergarten Readiness Promotion Bundle developed?

Kindergarten readiness is a meaningful measure of overall child well-being. However, *only half* of North Carolina children are assessed as fully ready for kindergarten. Children's primary care providers already make efforts to foster kindergarten readiness but are often limited by lack of information about services children receive or could access in the community – and how to best facilitate their connection to these resources. Primary care providers also do not receive data about kindergarten readiness on their patients.

The Kindergarten Readiness Promotion Bundle aims to encourage and give credit to providers for taking actions that promote kindergarten readiness. As primary care providers implement the bundle, practices will foster deeper connections to the community services that children need to be kindergarten ready.

How will the Kindergarten Readiness Promotion Bundle benefit children?

The goal of the Kindergarten Readiness Promotion Bundle is to maximize the actions that can be taken to foster the readiness of all children for school entry. By linking the activities in the bundle with financial incentives, NC InCK aims to encourage more children receiving *all* applicable supports for health and early learning to support kindergarten readiness.

How will the Kindergarten Readiness Promotion Bundle benefit providers?

The NC InCK Kindergarten Readiness Promotion Bundle offers an opportunity to receive credit for actions taken by providers that promote school readiness and financial incentives to support these important and innovative approaches by health care providers. Participating providers have the chance to receive:

- **Increased resources:** Financial incentives for practices successfully delivering the Bundle as part of the NC InCK Alternative Payment Model (APM)
- **Care integration support:** NC InCK Integration Consultants available to advise care managers on linkages to more early childhood services in their communities
- **Implementation support** through:
 - **Care Managers** at Medicaid Prepaid Health Plans or Advanced Medical Homes who can conduct outreach to children in need of well visits and connect children to services
 - **Training and coaching** by Prepaid Health Plans

- **NC InCK Early Childhood Innovation Committee** support in identifying and addressing service gaps
- **Information about the kids you care for:** Practices will receive aggregate data on the rates of kindergarten readiness among their patients.
- **Further innovation support:** Practices may choose to partner with NC InCK on selected pilot projects to address service gaps in promoting Kindergarten readiness.

What is included in the Kindergarten Readiness Promotion Bundle?

The Kindergarten Readiness Promotion Bundle includes *Universal* components that are applicable to all children at specific ages and flexible *Need-Based* components for children with specific needs. Need-Based components can be delivered in clinic or through referral. Children have received the Bundle if they receive any five of these components at a well visit.

		Birth to 3	3 to 5
Universal	Conduct well visit	✓	✓
	Office-based literacy promotion	✓	✓
	Developmental screening	✓	✓
	Social-emotional screening	✓	✓
	Fluoride varnish	✓	
	Hearing and vision screen		✓
Need-Based	Refer to PreK		✓
	Refer to CDSA	✓	
	Refer to Exceptional Children's program		✓
	Provide/refer to parenting support program	✓	✓
	Provide/refer to early childhood mental health program	✓	✓
	Refer to community-based literacy program	✓	✓

What will providers need to do differently for the NC InCK Kindergarten Readiness Promotion Bundle?

Primary care providers who are already delivering the Universal elements of the Bundle can maximize consistency across the practice. Additionally, practices can further promote kindergarten readiness through:

- **Outreach:** The Bundle applies to all children attributed to a practice, so outreach may be needed to encourage children who have missed well visits or who could use support in connecting to referrals.
- **Fostering additional services:** Practices can get support strengthening or adding a program or connection to promote delivery of the Bundle activities. For example, practices can receive help to begin a Reach Out and Read program to provide "Office-based literacy promotion" or to improve the early intervention referral workflow to facilitate referrals to CDSA.
- **Documentation and coding.** Practices should establish consistent electronic documentation methods for each component of the Bundle. Providers will need to document the Kindergarten Readiness Promotion Bundle using the applicable overall Bundle code as this is how rates of

Bundle delivery will be measured to determine financial incentives. This documentation will give providers credit for these important activities.

How is kindergarten readiness defined and measured?

In North Carolina, *kindergarten readiness* is measured in schools using the [Early Learning Inventory](#).

Cross-Sector NC InCK APM Performance Measures	
Kindergarten Readiness Rate	% of kindergarten students at or above development and learning expectation in the Early Learning Inventory , an observation-based formative assessment completed in schools that assesses five domains of early learning and development
Primary Care Kindergarten Readiness Promotion Bundle	% of patients birth to six years who received kindergarten readiness promotion bundle defined as a minimum of five universal and need-based interventions based on their eligibility and age