



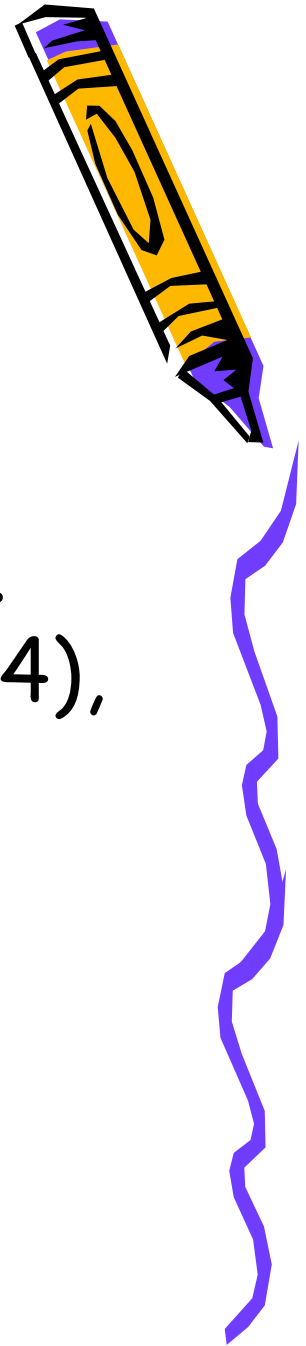
# School Readiness

Continuity Clinic Talk  
April 27, 2009  
Shannon Thyne



# Reference Article

- High, et al. AAP Technical Report. *School Readiness, Pediatrics*, 121 (4), April 2008.



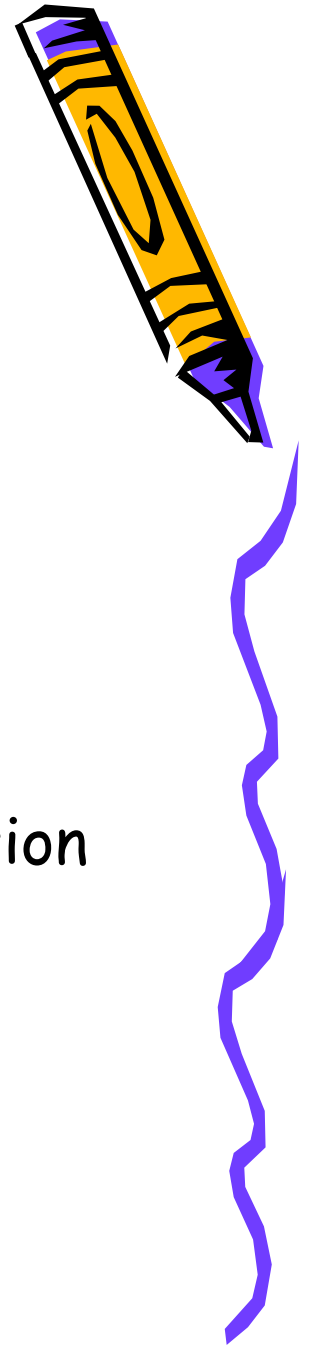
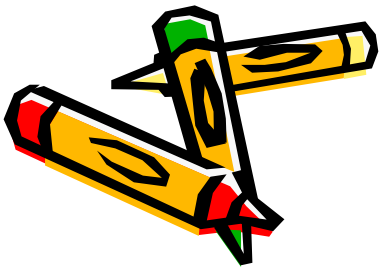
# Definition of School Readiness

- Readiness has been defined since 1991 with the "Ready to Learn" national mantra's goal:
  - "by 2000, all children will enter school ready to learn"
- Readiness by the child, the school, and the family/community are required in this scenario



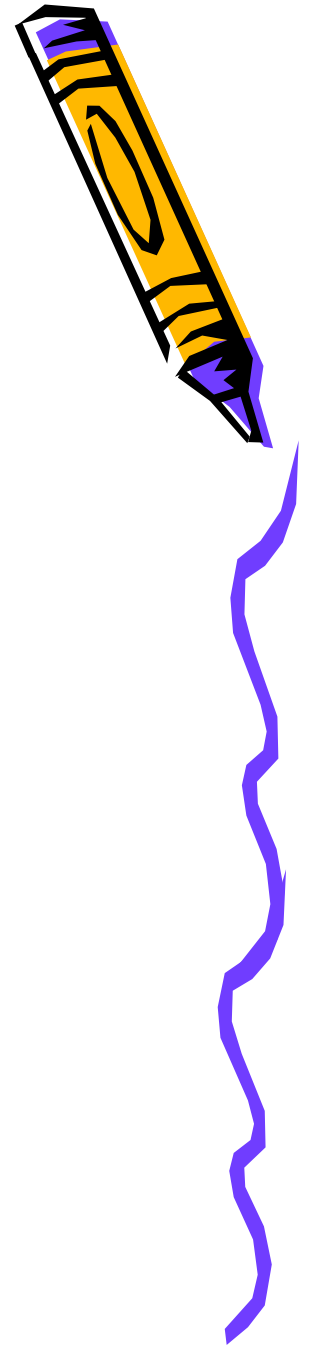
# Readiness by the Child, defined by...

- Physical well being
  - Including growth status, disability, motor development
- Emotional/social development
  - Turn taking, cooperation, empathy, expression of emotions
- Approaches to learning
  - enthusiasm, temperament, culture, values



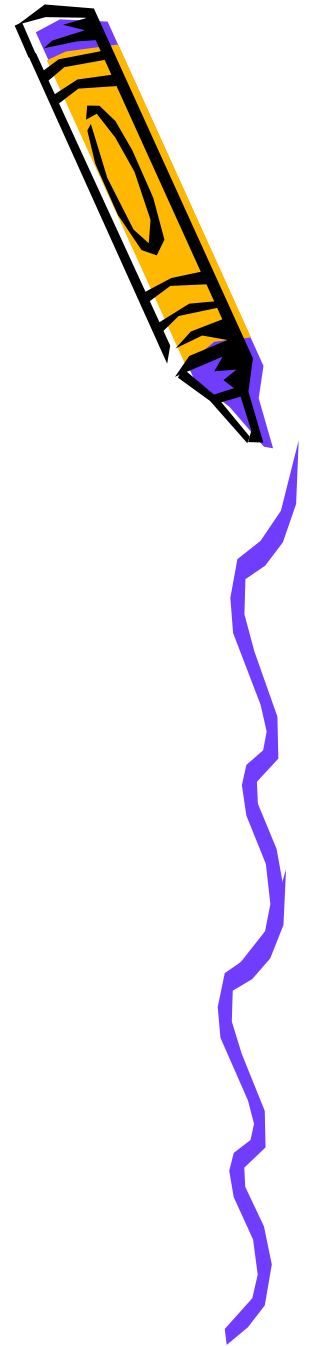
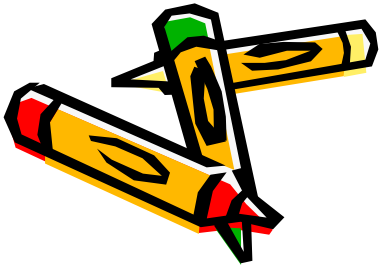
# Readiness by the Child (cont.)

- Language development
  - Listening, speaking, vocabulary
- General knowledge and cognition
  - Sound-letter association, spatial relations, number concepts



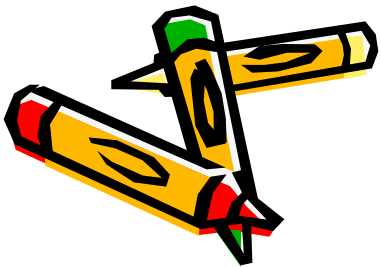
# Readiness by the School, ensured by...

- Facilitating transition from home
- Continuity between early programs and school
- High quality instruction
- Commitment to success of all children
- Commitment to success of all teachers



# Readiness by the School, ensured by... (cont.)

- Introducing approaches to raise achievement
  - Parent participation, early intervention when problems are noted
- Changing practices to meet the needs of children
- Assuming responsibility for results
- Having strong leadership



# Family/Community supports contributing to school readiness



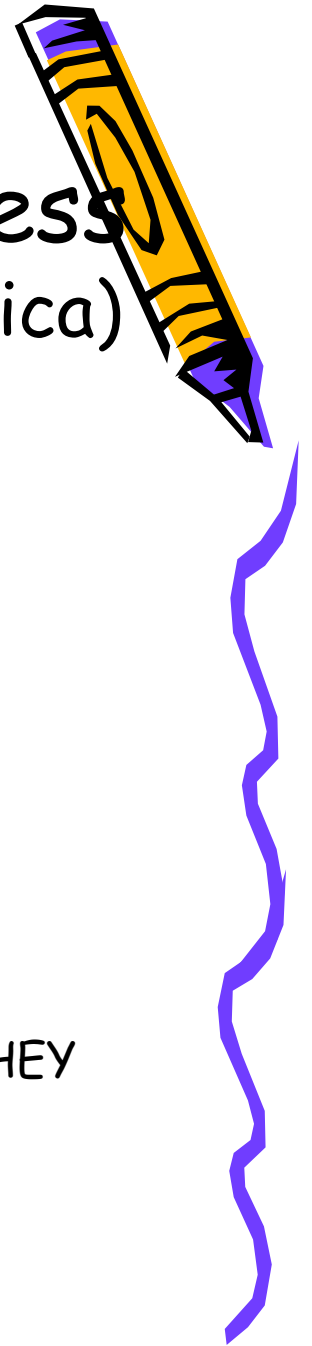
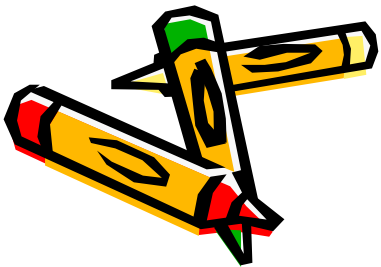
- Excellent maternal prenatal care and health care for children including physical activity, good nutrition
- Access to high quality preschool
- Parental devotion to daily learning for their children



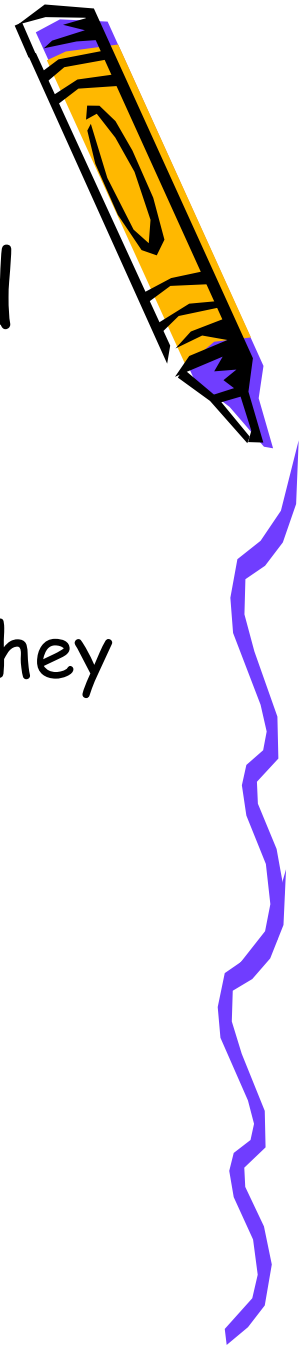


# Determination of School Readiness (from the Child Welfare League of America)

- Multiple factors, but environment most important
- 1<sup>st</sup>: 5 Universal needs
  - Nutrition
  - Economic security
  - Clothing and shelter
  - Appropriate education at home
  - Preventive physical and mental health services
- 2<sup>nd</sup>: Nurturing relationships with family
- 3<sup>rd</sup>: Opportunities for developing talents and skills
- 4<sup>th</sup>: Protection from injury
- 5<sup>th</sup>: Healing from injuries
- **ONLY WHEN CHILDREN HAVE BASIC NEEDS MET CAN THEY DEVELOP AND BECOME READY FOR SCHOOL...**



# Some specific theories on school readiness for the child



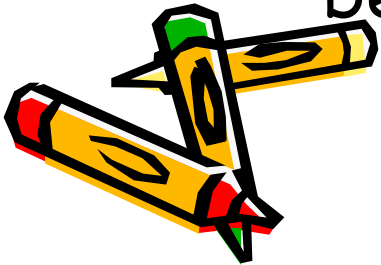
- "Idealist" view:
  - Children are ready for school when they have the following:
    - Self control
    - Peer relations
    - Ability to follow directions



# Some specific theories on school readiness for the child

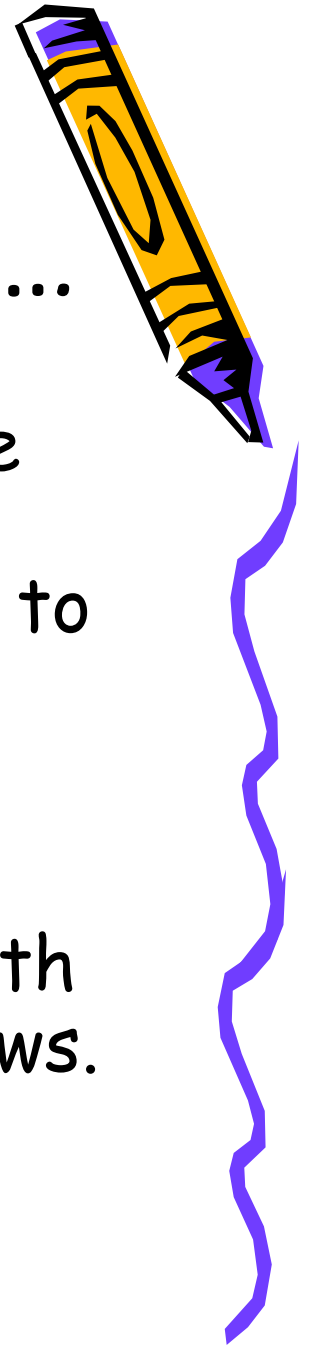
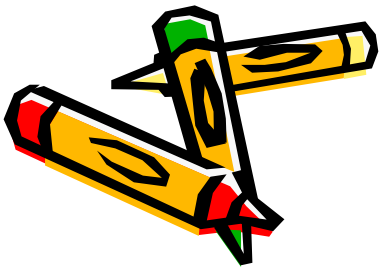


- "Environmentalism" view:
- Readiness is a direct result of what they have been taught
  - Children are ready for school when they know colors, shapes, counting, address
  - Children are ready for school when their behavior meets a certain standard



# Problems with these 2 views...

- Those who don't meet the standards are then asked to hold off on school entry with the expectation that time will lead to mastery and "readiness" achievement.
- This does not happen...
- In fact, being in school is the largest contributor to achieving the goals of both the "environmentalist" and "idealist" views.



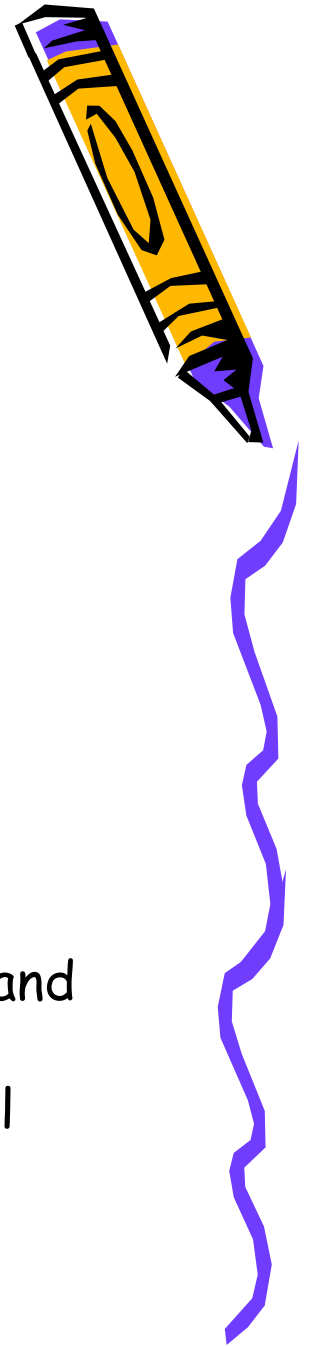
# Other views on school readiness

- “Social Constructivist” model and the “Interactional Relational” models:
  - Focus on the community and its values as the key to preparation for school



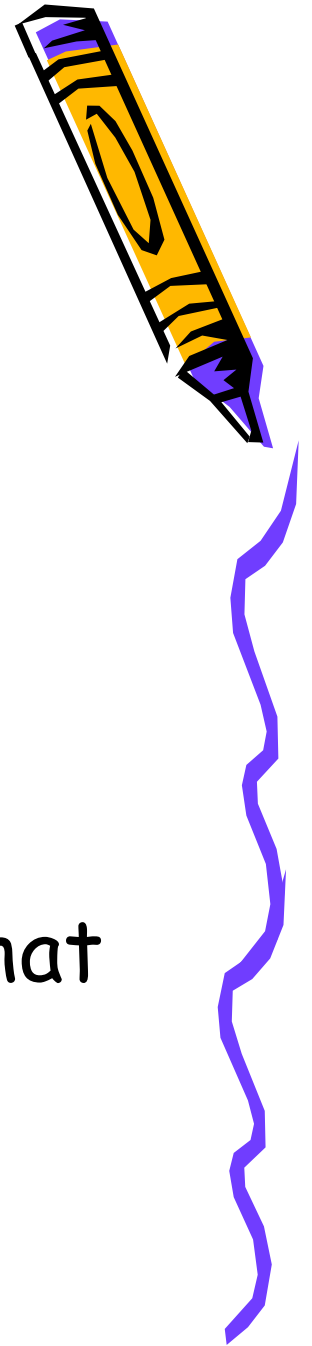
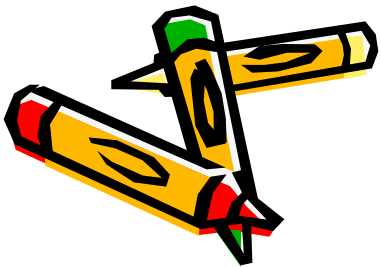
# Readiness Testing?

- NOT appropriate
- Such testing is based on the following misconceptions:
  1. Learning begins at school
  2. Readiness is specific condition in each child
  3. Readiness can be easily measured
  4. Readiness is a function of time
  5. Children are ready to learn when they sit quietly and listen
  6. Children who are not ready do not belong in school

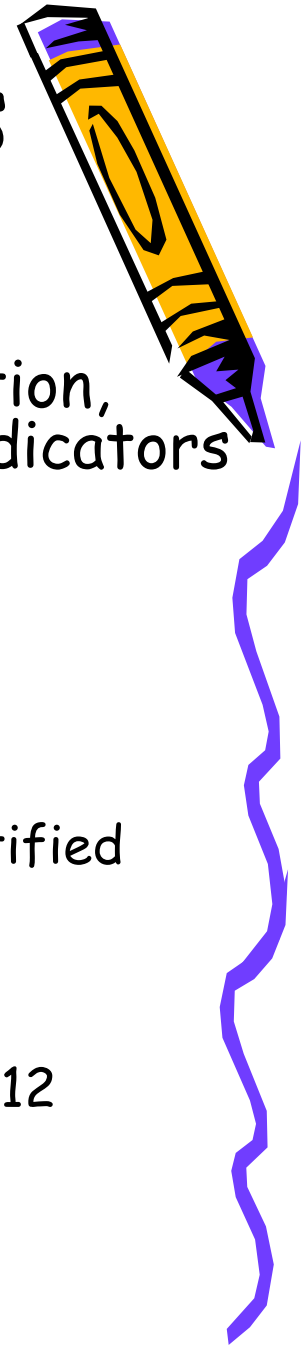


# Readiness Testing...

- Puts an emphasis on skills and is unfair in light of economic, social, cultural, and experiential norms in our society
- It can set children up for labels that persist throughout schooling



# How can schools & communities promote school readiness?



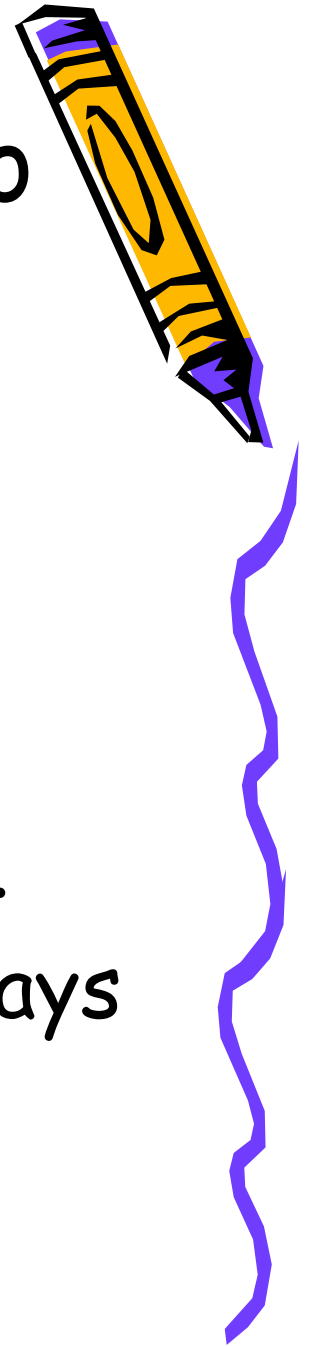
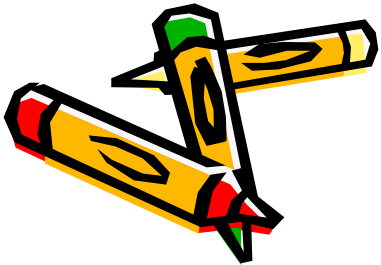
- This is poorly studied, however, Packard Foundation, Kaiser Foundation, etc. are currently tracking indicators of school and community readiness
- Community measures include:
  - Children with health coverage
  - Preschool enrollment
  - Universal access to full day kindergarten
  - Children with vision, dental, medical problems not identified prior to school entry
  - Adults enrolled in English learner courses
  - Education level of parents
  - Number of children with >2 foster placements in prior 12 months





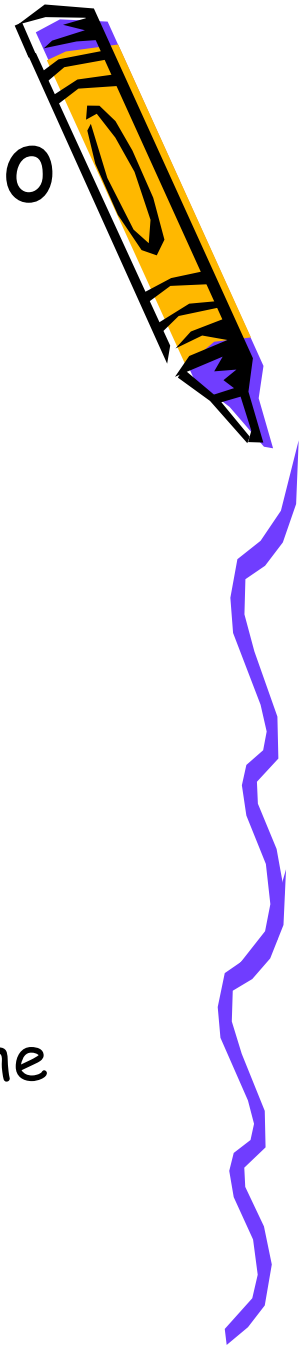
# What can pediatricians do to promote school readiness?

- Promote optimal nutrition, sleep, physical activity
- Screen for psychosocial risks, including violence, depression, etc.
- Identify educationally related delays early and refer to services



# What can pediatricians do to promote school readiness?

- Promote the 5 R's of early education
  - Reading together as a daily family activity
  - Rhyming, playing, and cuddling often
  - Routines and regular times for meals, play, sleep to promote understanding of expectations
  - Reward through praise for successes
  - Reciprocal and nurturing relationships as the foundation for healthy child development



# What can pediatricians do to promote school readiness?

- On a community level, pediatricians can advocate for improved policies and support proven programs (such as First Five in California) that have demonstrated success in preparing children for the school-based educational environment

