ReadiKids®

THE READIKIDS® LIFE READINESS SYSTEM

START HERE

QUICK-START GUIDE

Your First 30 Days

A Practical Guide to Creating Your Family's Plan

The Parent Leads • ReadiKids Equips • The Child Becomes

Practical tools to help your family begin.

Welcome

You already help your child become capable every day. You show them how to do things, let them try, and stay close when something goes wrong.

ReadiKids helps you bring those everyday experiences together into something more purposeful: your family's starting plan. It is not another school assignment or a complicated schedule. It is a practical way to recognize strengths, choose what your child may be ready to learn, and provide opportunities to practice.

As you work through this guide, fill in the plan worksheet near the end. Over the next 30 days, you will begin using that plan and adjusting it to fit your family. You do not need all the answers to begin.

1. Understand What You're Building

Life Readiness means preparing children for capable, responsible, and independent adulthood. The ReadiKids® Life Readiness System brings together three connected elements.

The Four Building Blocks — What to develop

- Practical: Everyday responsibilities, money, time, and personal skills.
- Mental & Emotional: Managing feelings, making decisions, solving problems, and recovering from difficulty.
- Social & Civic: Communication, relationships, cooperation, and contributing to others.
- Virtue & Character: Honesty, responsibility, courage, kindness, self-control, and good judgment.

Virtue runs through every Building Block. It gives direction to what children learn and how they use their abilities.

The Readiness Pack — What your child carries into life

Imagine an invisible backpack filled with developing skills, habits, experiences, and values. Your plan helps you notice what is already in your child's Pack and what they are ready to add.

The Family Council — How the plan stays alive

A short weekly family meeting creates time to celebrate progress, recognize contributions, solve problems, and agree on responsibilities.

2. Look at Where Your Child Is Today

Before deciding what to teach, consider what your child can already do. Where do you see confidence? Where does your child still need help? What experiences have they not yet had?

A child may handle chores well but struggle when plans change. Another may talk easily with adults but need practice following through. This is not a test; it is a starting point.

My Child's Readiness Snapshot can help you look across the Four Building Blocks: readikids.org/readiness-snapshot.

ADD TO YOUR PLAN · Record your child's strengths and developing capabilities.

3. Choose What Your Child Is Ready to Build

Your plan should reflect your child's age, maturity, experience, and interests. The stages below are guides, not rigid labels.

Stage	Your role	Possible opportunities
Little Explorers (birth–10)	Guide	Caring for belongings, helping with meals, naming feelings
Pathfinders (10–15)	Coach	Managing schedules, handling money, keeping commitments
Trailblazers (15–20)	Advisor	Making decisions, preparing for work, managing responsibilities

As children grow, parents increasingly move from showing to coaching and advising. Parents still provide direction when safety, maturity, or serious consequences require it.

How Capabilities Grow: Have · Do · Become

Have	Do	Become
Learn how and why a capability matters.	Practice with guidance, mistakes, and feedback.	Use the capability with growing independence.

For example, a Pathfinder learning to prepare dinner first watches, then practices with help, and eventually prepares a meal more independently. The goal is lasting capability, not simply a completed task.

ADD TO YOUR PLAN · Choose a capability, its Building Block, and a practical way to rehearse it.

4. Build a Family Reading Habit

Reading is an important part of Life Readiness. It helps children understand ideas, evaluate information, and develop independent judgment. Whatever other capabilities your family chooses, a reading habit can support growth across the Four Building Blocks.

Create a Reading Zone

A Reading Zone does not require a special room, expensive furniture, or many books. It can be a chair, a bedroom corner, or the kitchen table—somewhere comfortable with fewer interruptions. Keep reading materials within reach, reduce unnecessary screen distractions, and let your child help choose what to read.

Establish a Reading Rhythm

Choose a regular time that fits your household. Ten or fifteen focused minutes can be a useful beginning. Reading may include stories, books, articles, instructions, biographies, or practical information. Read together with younger children; offer older children choices and increasingly challenging material.

If reading is difficult, keep the experience encouraging. Reading aloud, audiobooks, and appropriate learning support can help children stay engaged with ideas while their reading skills develop.

Encourage Thinking, Not Just Finishing

- What interested you most?
- What was the writer trying to say?
- Do you agree? Why?
- What would you like to learn more about?

Not every reading experience needs a discussion. Sometimes the best outcome is simply enjoying a story.

ADD TO YOUR PLAN · Write down your Reading Zone and a realistic reading time.

5. Put Your Plan into Practice with the Family Council

A plan becomes useful when your family returns to it. The Family Council is a weekly meeting, usually 20–30 minutes, where everyone has a chance to participate.

Celebrate	Acknowledge	Solve	Act
Share what went well.	Thank someone specifically.	Consider a family problem together.	Agree on responsibilities before the next meeting.

Parents participate, too. Use the Act step to connect a capability in your family's plan to practice during the coming week. At the next Council, look back together: What worked? What needs adjusting? A notebook is enough to begin.

ADD TO YOUR PLAN · Choose a regular Family Council day and time.

6. Your First 30 Days: Build the Plan

Your first month is about creating a useful starting plan and establishing a rhythm you can continue. Use the worksheet on the next page as you go.

Week	Focus	What your family does
Week 1	Look	Notice strengths and growth opportunities across the Four Building Blocks. Use the Snapshot if helpful.
Week 2	Choose	Select a capability, identify everyday practice, and establish your Reading Zone and Rhythm.
Week 3	Gather	Hold your first Family Council. Share the plan, recognize progress, and agree on practice.
Week 4	Review	Hold another Council. Look at what worked, adjust the plan, and decide what to continue.

Some weeks will go better than others. A missed meeting or unfinished responsibility does not mean the plan has failed. Review, adjust, and continue.

How to Use Your Plan

Start with what matters to your family. A plan is useful when it fits real life, not when every blank is filled perfectly. Keep it where you can find it, bring it to Family Council, and update it as your child grows.

If you have children at different stages, consider completing a separate worksheet for each child while keeping a shared Family Council and reading routine.

7. Your Family's Starting Plan

Use this worksheet to capture your starting plan. Revisit it during Family Council. This is a living plan, not a contract or a scorecard.

Child's name and age:

Strengths I see developing:

A capability my child is ready to develop:

Building Block connected to this capability:

How we will practice it in everyday life:

How I will guide or support the practice:

Our Reading Zone:

Our Reading Rhythm (when and what):

Our regular Family Council day and time:

How we will recognize progress and review the plan:

8. Where to Go Next

You now have a starting plan for your family. Keep practicing, reviewing, and adapting it as your child grows.

Your next useful step

If you have not completed My Child's Readiness Snapshot, it can help you identify strengths and areas for growth: readikids.org/readiness-snapshot. If you have, bring what you learned into your worksheet and your next Family Council.

Resources when you are ready

As your family begins putting the Life Readiness System into practice, these resources can provide additional ideas, guidance, and support.

- Family Council Starter Kit — Helps you begin and maintain a weekly family meeting.
- ReadiKids Parent Guides — Explore the Building Blocks, everyday teaching opportunities, and Family Council in more depth.
- The ReadiKids® Life Readiness System Guide — A separate, comprehensive book developed from Raising Children Capable of Leaving Home. It provides practical guidance for developing capabilities and building a plan that grows with your child.
- Raising Children Capable of Leaving Home — The original book that explores the concerns, ideas, and principles that led to the development of the ReadiKids Life Readiness System.

Explore current resources at readikids.org.

A Final Thought

Preparing your child for life does not require a perfect plan or a perfect week. It takes attention, guidance, opportunities to practice, and a willingness to adjust as your child grows. Your family's plan gives that work direction.

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