



ASK Jane

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Each Newsletter we'll feature questions from readers about issues affecting children and families affected by trauma. Have a question? Submit it [HERE](#).

Q. "Should I keep my son back a year in Kindergarten?"

A. There's no simple answer. In theory Kindergarten should be ready for the variety of five-year olds who come to them — not so much the reverse. It's hard to predict in March where he'll be socially and emotionally by August. He may make big gains in his development, especially with scaffolding by his parents and teachers that allows him to do more for himself.

That being said, it can be challenging to be the youngest one, chronologically or developmentally or both. But there will always be a least a year spread in the ages in any grade level. If he is really immature, he might benefit by taking another year to mature before entering kindergarten. However, if you wait a year, what will you be doing to challenge him and help him grow?

At JPA, we know how social/emotional skills help prepare children to be successful in Kindergarten. We even have a program called C2K that addresses some of the issues contained in this question. We'd be happy to provide information to help you decide what to do. Feel free to contact us.

Q: Why are women so prominent in health and childcare fields? Why aren't there more men?

A: Traditionally, women have gravitated toward (or been steered toward) caretaking, which was seen as an outgrowth of childrearing. For much of our social history, women have had very limited options outside of family- and child-oriented careers. Advances have enabled women to enter more male-dominated spheres, but they are still often slotted into areas like child care, teaching, and nursing.

Despite the critical importance of these fields, they have been considered low-status and therefore low-paid, yet most available to women. Stereotypically, men seek out higher status and higher paying jobs. Men who go into health care or teaching tend to be doctors, not nurses, and professors, not grade school teachers. Although this situation has changed in the last 30-40 years, issues such as pay and status disparities still reflect the need for more equitable treatment.

Successful women in these fields like Maria Montessori, Anna Freud, Melanie Klein, Karen Horney have played major roles in our understanding of child psychology, parent-child relationships, teaching methodologies, and many other aspects of "female-oriented" occupations.

We still have a long way to go to break through these traditional societal and cultural stereotypes. However, men can be as caring and nurturing as women, and women can be as driven by success and financial gain as men. But one key to eliminating the gender disparity is to give fields like social work, teaching, and child care the status and attention they deserve, recognizing the vast and far-reaching social contributions they are continuing to make.