



From Preschool to the Workplace: Prioritizing the Skills that AI Can't Replace

August 14, 2026

Bright Horizons Research Finds 82% of Parents Say Confidence Is Essential for Kindergarten Readiness

NEWTON, Mass.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Aug. 14, 2026-- The back-to-school season is upon us, and with it, time filled with schedule changes and increased logistical planning for working parents. As young children begin their educational journey, many parents are thinking about the role early education plays in preparing them not only for kindergarten, but for lifelong success. Research from the [2025 Modern Family Index](#) (MFI) study on school readiness, commissioned by Bright Horizons (NYSE:BFAM) and conducted by The Harris Poll, revealed 82% of parents agree that children entering kindergarten with confidence is just as important as being able to say the alphabet.

According to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the emphasis parents place on confidence, creativity, and social-emotional development reflects longstanding research on school readiness. Per [NAEYC](#), readiness is not limited to academic skills but encompasses children's social and emotional competence, curiosity, and approaches to learning.

Additional MFI findings indicate that parents are already thinking ahead about the skills their children will need in an AI-driven future:

- 73% of parents feel that the rise of AI has made durable skills – such as creativity, social skills, and emotional skills –just as important as traditional academic skills like reading, writing, and math when it comes to their children's development.
- Nearly three-quarters (73%) of parents believe AI will have a significant impact on the skills that are important for children to develop early in life.
- At the same time, 79% of parents believe that developing creative skills will be crucial for children growing up in a world increasingly shaped by AI.

These findings suggest that parents recognize the transformative influence of emerging technologies while also valuing the importance of fostering creativity and social-emotional skills from an early age. Likewise, adults are also recognizing that these skills are critical not only for kindergarten readiness, but for long-term success throughout life.

In fact, the [World Economic Forum's recent Future of Jobs Report](#) identified creative thinking, resilience, flexibility, leadership, social influence, and self-awareness among the most important skills workers will need by 2030 as AI continues to transform the workplace. The MFI findings underscore that early education and the skills taught and learned in preschool classrooms today are the relevant skills and abilities that will also help children thrive as adults in an AI-driven world.

For more insights, research, and resources to support working families, visit [BrightHorizons.com](#).

About the Bright Horizons Modern Family Index

Over the past decade, Bright Horizons has tracked trends impacting working families through its Modern Family Index (MFI) research studies. To download the Bright Horizons Modern Family Index full report on School Readiness, [click here](#).

About Bright Horizons Family Solutions Inc.

Bright Horizons® is a leading provider of high-quality early education and child care, back-up care, and workforce education services. For 40 years, we have partnered with employers to support workforces by providing services that help working families and employees thrive personally and professionally. Bright Horizons operates approximately 1,000 early education and child care centers in the United States, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Australia and India, and serves more than 1,450 of the world's leading employers. Bright Horizons' early education and child care centers, back-up child and elder care, and workforce education programs help employees succeed at each life and career stage. For more information, go to [www.brighthouse.com](#).

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