



Preparing Your Child for School

TIPS AND TOOLS FOR PARENTS

Starting school can create a mix of emotions for both parent and child. The more prepared your child is for the start of school, the more successful their transition can be. Have fun preparing your child. The following are some of the activities you can do with your child to support with their school readiness and help promote a smooth transition to school:

BECOME FAMILIAR WITH THE SCHOOL

Openly discuss school with your child and plan to visit the school and school playground together. Visiting the school and playing on the playground will help familiarize your child with the school, playground, and school surroundings increasing your child's comfort with the new environment.

GET INTO A ROUTINE

Begin to adjust your child's sleeping and eating routines in the weeks leading up to the start of school, preparing them for the structure of the day once school begins. Have your child wake, get dressed, and fed like they would on a regular school day; schedule snack time during the day similar to those scheduled at the school. Having a daily schedule can also help with your child's transitioning from one activity to another, build on sequencing/order of events, and concepts of time.

READ BOOKS ABOUT SCHOOL

Over the summer read a variety of books about school with your child. Take time to discuss the story, how the characters felt, and ask how your child is feeling. If your child shares concerns, let them know that they've been heard and help them think through their concerns.

USE PRETEND PLAY TO PRACTICE IMPORTANT SCHOOL SKILLS

Act out common school routines taking turns being the student and the teacher, such as saying good morning and good bye, hanging up a jacket and changing shoes, Circle Time, listening to stories, singing songs, and playing (sharing, waiting, and taking turns).

PRACTICE INDEPENDENCE

Encourage your child to be independent with dressing/undressing (jacket, backpack, shoes, etc.). Create opportunities to practice these skills, such as race to see who can put their shoes on first, set a timer and try to get ready before the timer goes off, or pack a lunch similar to one packed for school and go on a picnic allowing your child to practice opening up lunch box and lunch items.

References:

Ontario Ministry of Education (2015). Tips and told for parents: 10 tips to get your child ready for school. Retrieved January 2nd, 2015 from <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/abc123/eng/tips/ready.html>.

Zero to Three: National Center for Infants, Toddlers and Families (2014). Preschool prep: how to prepare your toddler for preschool. Retrieved January 2nd, 2015 from <http://www.zerotothree.org/early-care-education/child-care/preschool-prep-how-to.html>.



BOOKS TO READ WITH YOUR CHILD ABOUT STARTING SCHOOL

The Kissing Hand
- Audrey Penn

Nitam-Gizhigad The First Day
- Mike Parkhill

First Day Jitters
- Julie Danneberg and Judith DuFour Love

My Teacher
- James Ransome

The Night Before Kindergarten
- Natasha Wing

Kindergarten Rocks!
- Katie Davis

First Day of School (Little Critter Series)
- Mercer Mayer

The Berenstain Bears Go Back to School
- Stan Berenstain

Wow! School!
- Robert Neubecker