



Get Ready for Kindergarten

Even though starting kindergarten is an exciting milestone in your child's life, it may cause a lot of anxiety for your child and you, too.

As a parent, your attitude, values and behaviors toward school will have a major effect on your child. Here are some tips to help you prepare your child for the first, big day and for doing well in school:

- * **Be sure that your child gets enough sleep.** Establish a bedtime routine. Children need at least 8-10 hours of sleep. Plan enough time in the morning to get ready, so you and your child don't feel rushed.
- * **Each evening, set out clothes and other items needed for school the next day.** Ask your child to decide what clothes s/he will wear. Letting children make choices helps foster brain development and builds confidence.
- * **Make a transportation plan.** If your child walks to school, do it together a few times beforehand so he knows the route. If your child rides a school bus, review where the bus stop is located. Check with neighbors to see if their children attend the school and set up a chaperone plan for those who wait for the bus.
- * **Get to know the faculty at the school and their roles.** If a problem arises, you will know the teacher or staff person to contact.
- * **If your child seems apprehensive or anxious about starting school, talk about his or her concerns.** Show understanding and offer encouragement. A positive, calm attitude can make a world of difference for your child.
- * **Read with your child.** Go to the library together. Buy books for birthday gifts. Research shows that children whose parents read to them on a regular basis do better in school.

Is your child ready for kindergarten? Here's a list of things most children starting school should be able to do:

- ☐ Count out loud from 1-20
- ☐ Count 10 objects correctly
- ☐ Read number symbols 0-10
- ☐ Speak in five-to-six word sentences
- ☐ Match letters and name the letters in his or her own name
- ☐ Tell stories
- ☐ Draw pictures (rather than just scribble)
- ☐ Follow a series of three directions
- ☐ Tell the right hand from left hand
- ☐ Compare objects by size
- ☐ Bounce and catch a ball (showing the hand-eye coordination necessary for reading and math)
- ☐ Listen to a story for at least five minutes
- ☐ Cope with being away from parents and caregivers
- ☐ Recognize rhyming sounds
- ☐ Trace basic shapes
- ☐ Read his or her own name

