

Tips for Transitioning to Kindergarten

Before School Starts

1. Send a note to the nurse and to the teacher if your child has allergies or special needs. Do this even if you have indicated this on other forms already. It may be critical for teachers to know that your child reacts to bee stings, has food allergies, or has hearing or vision modifications. As a parent, you have the responsibility to advocate for your child's health and safety.
2. Visit the school and meet the teacher. If there is a visiting day to meet your child's teacher and visit her classroom before school starts, make sure to participate. If you missed visiting day or the school does not offer one, call to see if you can arrange a quick visit to see the school and to meet the teacher with your child
3. Start your school routine early. To reduce stress and get used to new routines adjust new bedtimes or wake up times a few weeks before school begins. Routines are comforting for us and for children. Read a soothing bedtime story every night to help your child fall asleep with comforting thoughts. Do not watch the news or violent programs in the evening.
4. Read books together about starting school. You can ask your local librarian for suggestions or try some of these:
 - *Miss Bindergarten Gets Ready for Kindergarten*, Joseph Slate (Illustrated by Ashley Wolff)
 - *Seven Little Mice Go to School*, Kazuo Iwamura
 - *Pete the Cat: Rocking in My School Shoes*, Eric Litwin (Illustrated by James Dean)
 - *Mom, It's My First Day of Kindergarten*, Hyewon Yum
 - *Yoko Learns to Read*, Rosemary Wells

On the First Day of School

1. Be positive. Give your child a smile and a hug, tell her you love her, and wave goodbye.
2. Help your child say goodbye. Saying goodbye in a new setting can be frightening for some children. When you say goodbye (either at the bus or at school), reassure your child that you will see her later. Mention a specific time and a concrete activity, for example "I will pick you up before lunchtime and we will have lunch together."
3. Avoid behaviors that might upset your child. For example, try not to:
 - Cry as you wave to your child through the bus window.
 - Battle with your child about an outfit you want her to wear.
 - Force your child to eat a big breakfast. (She may be nervous and it might be better to eat lightly than to have a stomachache, for the first couple of days).
4. Wait to ask the teacher your specific questions. The first day of school is not the time to bombard the teacher with personal requests and information. Remember, your child is one of 20 or 25 children. Trust that the teacher is a professional who will make your child feel welcome and help her feel like a member of the classroom community

- See more at: <http://families.naeyc.org/learning-and-development/child-development/transitioning-kindergarten#sthash.WM9wabSy.dpuf>