



Getting Ready for Kindergarten

Babies are born ready to learn. Parents and families can help children make the most of these important early learning years. Up to age 5, children’s brains are growing at a dazzling pace!

Contributions made to learning in those years will last a lifetime.

The most important things families can do are to talk and read to their children from the day they are born. When reading or talking to your child, ask questions and explain things. Conversations and books can teach more than just how to recognize words. They can build important critical thinking skills.

Establish routines. At least a month before school starts, begin to set firm mealtime and bedtime schedules. Schedule daytime activities as well, like watching TV, playing, and doing chores. Get your child used to being on time and things happening on schedule. A good night’s sleep (10 - 12 hours) and a nutritious breakfast will help keep your child focused and learning. Place is also important. Set up a place where your child reads, paints, colors, and makes things. Put the backpack and school supplies in the same place to have them ready to go in the morning.

Talk about kindergarten. Weeks before school starts, talk about kindergarten with your child. Listen to how he or she is feeling. Be reassuring and upbeat. Your enthusiasm and excitement about learning will set a powerful and positive tone.

Encourage independence and responsibility. Create opportunities for your child to make choices. Let him or her choose what to wear, where to play, or what friends or relatives to call. Encourage your child to take a bigger role in dressing him or herself. Support good health habits, such as washing hands, and covering nose and mouth to sneeze or cough.

Make school familiar. Take a field trip to the school, visit a classroom, and introduce your child to the teachers. Walk by the school during recess and watch the children play. Take your child to play on the playground when school is not in session.

Kindergarten is the first year of formal school for most children in the United States.

In kindergarten, hands-on learning activities help prepare youngsters for the challenges that lie ahead.

Parents can prepare themselves and their children in various ways for a smooth and positive transition to kindergarten.

