

# Helping a Child Get Ready for

# KINDERGARTEN



**Is your child ready for kindergarten?** You may be thinking about early reading, writing, or math skills, but success in school may have more to do with a child's ability to be independent, follow directions, and communicate their needs. The following tips can help your child feel ready for the first day of kindergarten.

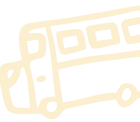
## MONTHS BEFORE SCHOOL STARTS

- ✓ Read books together about important topics. Visit your local library to find books about kindness, friendship, taking turns, speaking up, making mistakes, doing your best, and more.
- ✓ Play games that help your child work on using their memory, taking turns, focusing on a task, and practicing self-control.
- ✓ Visit [Mind in the Making's Skill-Building Opportunities](#) to learn how to encourage important skills, like curiosity, listening, focus, and communication.



## WEEKS BEFORE SCHOOL STARTS

- ✓ Have your child practice using the snaps, buttons, and zippers on the clothing and jackets they'll wear to school.
- ✓ Let them practice opening items they might have in their lunch or snack. Think snack bags, small milk cartons, and fruit cups.
- ✓ Role play common social situations. Your child can practice introducing themselves, offering a turn on the playground, handling a disagreement with a friend, or asking a teacher for help.
- ✓ Teach your child to answer to their full name, especially if they use a nickname.
- ✓ Children find it comforting when they know what to expect. Talk through what will happen the morning of the first day of school, how they'll get to school, and what they'll do after school.
- ✓ Visit the school beforehand so your child can meet their teacher and see their classroom.
- ✓ Talk about things your child is excited for, like riding the bus, art class, or the playground.
- ✓ Let your child pick out some of their school clothes or supplies, if possible.
- ✓ Set up play time with other new kindergarteners you know.
- ✓ Set a bedtime and wake-up time for the school year that allow your child to get plenty of rest. Ease into the new bedtime a few weeks in advance.



# Tips for a Smooth Transition

## TALK ABOUT GOING TO SCHOOL IN POSITIVE WAYS.

Avoid saying things like, “In kindergarten you can’t do that.” or “If you do that at school you’ll get into trouble.” Instead, affirm that your child will learn a lot and have fun.



## IT IS NORMAL IF YOUR CHILD IS FEELING NERVOUS OR AFRAID ABOUT STARTING SCHOOL.

Remember that you don’t have to change or fix those feelings. Listen and show understanding to any feelings that they express. You could say, “I can understand why you’re feeling that way. It’s normal to be nervous when you’re starting something new.”

## CONTINUE TO ENJOY FAVORITE ACTIVITIES TOGETHER IN THE DAYS BEFORE SCHOOL STARTS.

Assure your child that you can still do a lot of those things together even after they are officially a kindergartener.

