



Preparing Your Child for School

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It's that time again, the days are getting shorter, the leaves are turning colour and the children are getting excited about a new beginning - well, some children!! Most children will experience a new teacher, a new classroom or a new school. With a little preparation, children can move from 'pool time' to 'school time' without tears.

What can children do to ease the transition?

- Check out all the flyers and plan a shopping trip for a new backpack and school supplies.
- Make decisions about the first days at school: What to wear? What to pack in their backpack? What to take for lunch? Would they like someone to stay with them the first day? Ride the bus or be driven?
- Mail a picture or make a phone call to a 'special someone' to share the exciting news.
- Draw a picture or write a story for the new teacher.
- Fill a small photo album with pictures of familiar faces from home. Take it to school to show teachers and friends.
- Make a paper chain to count the days until school starts.
- Mark 'school days' and 'home days' with fun stickers on your very own calendar.
- Play 'school' with friends. Children may work through some feelings during this 'play' activity.

What can adults do?

- Help children stay connected to last year's teacher. Teachers are pleased to see students return for a 'hello' visit. Call ahead to avoid disappointment.
- With your child, walk the halls of the new school, see the classrooms, play on the playground (even on the weekend). The more familiar the school, the friendlier it will be!
- Friends are very important, especially in the early days. Ask the teacher to lend a hand if your child needs help in finding a playmate.
- Allow scared, mad, confused and excited feelings as part of the natural process of change. Listen to your child with smiles, nods and hugs. Find books on feelings and 'the first day of school'.
- Drive your child to school the first few days or follow the bus so they can see you and wave?
- a surprise in your child's backpack; a special treat might give the day a boost. A family photo might be calming.
- your child to make lots of decisions. even if it's difficult for you to see the mismatched outfits and old sneakers!!
- all the things your child does well. Children with high self-esteem are better able to manage challenging situations.

In each of our lives, change happens. If children can experience success when new challenges occur, they will increase their confidence for the many, many 'new beginnings' in their lives!

