



Tipsheet: Getting Ready for Kindergarten

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

1. **Be sure 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.
2. **Each evening, set out clothes and other items needed for school the next day.**
Ask your child to decide what clothes he/she will wear. Letting children make choices helps foster brain development and builds confidence.
3. **Make a transportation plan.**
If your child walks to school, do it together a few times beforehand so he/she 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.
4. **Get to know the faculty and their roles.**
If a problem arises you will know the teacher or staff person to contact.
5. **If your child is apprehensive or anxious about starting school, talk about his/her concerns.**
Show understanding and offer encouragement. A positive, calm attitude can make a world of difference for your child.
6. **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?

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 letters in his/her name
- Tell stories
- Draw pictures (rather than just scribble)
- 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/caregivers
- Recognize rhyming sounds
- Trace basic shapes
- Read his or her own name

Source: Minneapolis Way To Grow: 612-874-4740

Resources: [United Way 2-1-1™](#) is a free and confidential, 24-hour information/referral line that can connect you to helpful programs and resources in our community. Just dial 2-1-1 or 651-291-0211.