

Parents often ask for suggestions on how they can best prepare their child for Kindergarten.

1. Prior to September, take your child to the school so that the building will feel familiar. Play on the playground and/or call the school to determine if there will be a kindergarten orientation or open house so your child can see the space where he or she will be learning.
2. Encourage your child to be independent at such things as dressing and using the bathroom on his or her own. Also encourage your child to be responsible for such everyday tasks as putting away toys and materials that he or she has used, and helping out in small ways at home.
3. Take time to talk with your child. Encourage your child to talk about everyday activities. Share special activities together such as walks to the park, and talk about what you are seeing and doing. Strong language skills are important for success in school.
4. Read to your child every day. There is overwhelming evidence that children who are read to become readers. Read different types of books such as picture books, information books, nursery rhymes and poetry books. Encourage your child to talk with you about the stories as you read them together.
5. Develop a good bedtime and morning routine with your child. This can be difficult over the summer but it will be helpful to try and put regular routines back into place the week before school.
6. Kindergarten children need approximately 10 to 12 hours of sleep each night. You will want to get your child to bed early enough so that they can get up in the morning, have time to eat a nutritious breakfast and get ready for school without rushing. Children do not learn well if they are tired or hungry.
7. For safety reasons, your child should know their first and last name, telephone number and/or address.
8. There are no expectations for your child to come to school knowing a variety of academic skills such as letters or numbers. However, if your child is displaying an interest and you would like to help your child to learn letters and numbers, it should be done in an enjoyable and relaxing way. Celebrate beginning attempts to communicate through reading and writing. If your child is not yet showing an interest in these things, you don't need to worry as it will be the teacher's role to teach them. It is helpful if your child can print his or her first name or even a first initial, but again, it is not mandatory and your child will quickly catch on at school.