

Eyes on



School transition

Starting school on the right foot



PARENTS



CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE FOR CHILDREN'S WELL-BEING

Early Childhood Development



“Children start developing the skills that will help them in school from the first years of life.”

What do we know?

- Children start developing the skills that will help them in school from the first years of life. Parents and child care workers play a role in helping children get ready for school.
- Many parents think children are ready for school if they’ve learned certain academic activities, such as knowing the alphabet.
- In fact, school readiness means much more. It means that children start school with the basic skills they need to learn to read, write and count. It also means that children are healthy and able to get along with others.
- Children are more likely to make a smooth transition into school if they can follow instructions, solve problems, work well on their own and stay focused on a difficult task (even if they don’t enjoy it).
- Parents play an important role in helping their children prepare for school. Good family relationships and stimulating activities at home and at child care centres can help children succeed in school.
- Warm and loving parents, who respond quickly to their children’s needs and questions, provide a steady routine, and enforce clear limits help set the stage for success at school.
- Even the relationship between children’s parents can make a difference. When mothers and fathers have a good relationship with each other, the children are more likely do well academically and to have harmonious relationships with others.
- Parents who communicate easily, resolve their conflicts peacefully and are able to control their emotions help support their child’s success in school.
- How well children get along with each other also plays a role. Children who are accepted by others feel like they belong. They are less likely to behave in ways that make it difficult to adapt to school (e.g. being timid or aggressive).
- The way children feel about their school is also a factor. Children who succeed often have formed a bond or an attachment with their school. Those who have a good attitude and take part in classroom activities tend to do better.

Paying attention to...

What can be done?

... the quality of child care services in the early years. This can have a big impact on how well your child develops in the areas that will help her succeed in school, such as language skills.

- Choose a child care setting where children are in small groups and staff members are well-trained in child development.

... developing a good relationship with your child's teacher before your child enters school.

- Take the time to visit the school before the first day of class. Introduce your child to the teacher, if possible.
- Explain to your child what he will be asked to do in kindergarten. For example, he will need to get along with the teacher, take part in classroom activities and make friends with classmates.

... helping the child to have realistic expectations about school.

- Before school begins, find out what activities the school recommends to help your child prepare for school.
- Enrol your child in workshops to develop social skills. These activities may be offered by the school or a community organization.





Information

The Centre of Excellence for Early Childhood Development identifies and summarizes the best scientific work on the social and emotional development of young children. It disseminates this knowledge to a variety of audiences in formats and languages adapted to their needs.

For a more in-depth understanding of school transition, consult our experts' articles in the Encyclopedia on Early Childhood Development, available free of charge at www.child-encyclopedia.com.

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