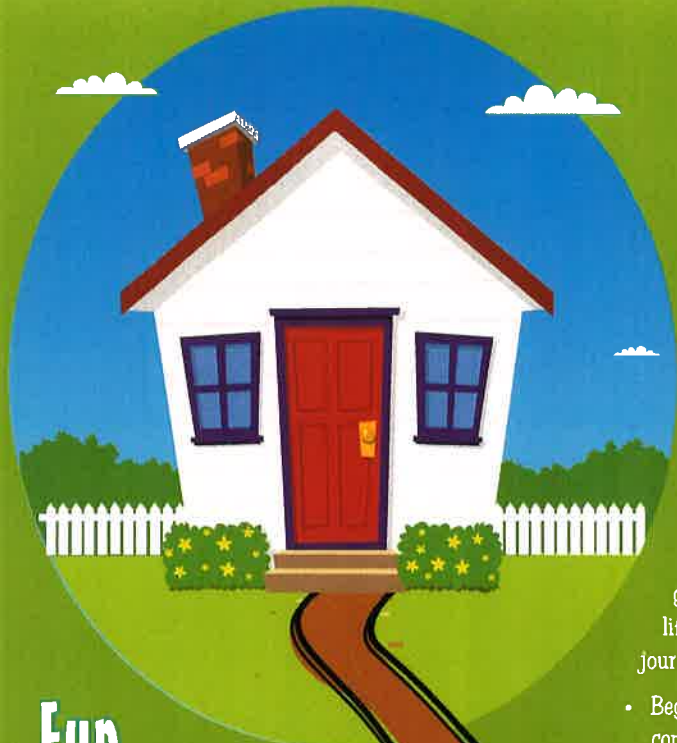


"The best thing to spend on your children is your time." -Louise Hart



Ready, Set, Go - Getting off to a good start in your journey toward kindergarten

Kindergarten represents a huge milestone in your life and in the life of your child. The year before kindergarten can be a great chance for you and your child to get ready for this big life event! Here are some tips to think about as you begin the journey:

- **Begin early** – Talk with your child about the change that will be coming and allow your child to ask questions and express fears.
- **Keep it positive** – It's normal for families to feel some anxiety when their child goes off to kindergarten, but if you can, try to keep it positive when you talk about the change with your child, so that he or she doesn't feel anxious about it as well.
- **Teach new skills** – Use the year ahead to teach your child some of the skills and routines that will be useful in kindergarten
 - **Make connections between the adults in your child's life** – If your child currently attends preschool or receives special services, talk with your child's teacher or therapist about creating a transition plan for your child. If your child has special needs, set up a meeting with the school principal to discuss how the school staff can best support your child's individual needs.
 - **Take a tour** – most schools are happy to have a child come for a short visit to get familiar with the school building and see a kindergarten classroom at the beginning of the school year. Call the school that your child will attend and set up a time for a visit!
 - **Find out when kindergarten registration will be held** in your county.

Fun for Families

- Let your child help with household chores such as folding laundry or washing dishes
- Understand what can be reasonably expected of children, especially yours
- Go to a park
- Don't be afraid to turn off the TV
- Bake cookies or cupcakes from scratch
- Look at a flower together – up close! Talk about all that you see...
- Put out plastic containers and lids with small items to move around – this will encourage your child to count, sort, and explore!

September

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Tips for Families

Practice these skills with your child until he or she is able to do them all by themselves!

- Blow nose, cover a sneeze with a tissue
- Use the toilet independently
- Wash own hands
- Snap button, zipper or belt own pants
- Take off and put on coat
- Recognize own possessions such as jacket, lunch box, etc.
- Sit at a table to eat
- Use silverware at mealtimes
- Eat at regular times during the day
- Put away toys when asked
- Express thoughts and feelings

Some children with special needs may need help or support materials to do these things. Talk to your child's teacher to figure out a way to make sure that these supports will be provided in kindergarten.

Resources For Families

Book: Ready, Start, School! : Nurturing and Guiding Your Child Through Preschool & Kindergarten by Sandra F. Rief

Website: Child Development Institute
www.childdevelopmentinfo.com

FL Center for Parent Involvement, Transition to Kindergarten
<http://cfs.cbcs.usf.edu/resource-centers/fcpi/transition.cfm>

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Cuddle Up and Read with Your Child

Look Out Kindergarten, Here I Come!
by Nancy Carlson

Circus Shapes by Stuart J. Murphy

When a Line Bends a Shape Begins
by Rhonda Gowler Greene

Hector the Hermit Crab by Katie Boyce

Ten Black Dots by Donald Crews

