

Preparing for Preschool: Pointers From Parents

Find tips on preparing for preschool from other families that have gone through the tricky transition.

By Scholastic Parents Staff



Starting in a new preschool or child-care center, returning after a summer vacation, moving up to a new classroom, greeting an unfamiliar teacher: any of these situations can mean big adjustments for a little person. To help your child in preparing for preschool, try this parent- and

teacher-tested advice.

Morning Moves

Just like a first impression, the first minutes of the day are all-important. Here's how to start smoothly while preparing for preschool.

- **Take a big-kid backpack.** Let your child take a small backpack to and from school that has board books and a small toy. If the teacher does not have a good place to leave it, keep it in the car. Kids love having a backpack, it makes them feel big even if they only wear it from the door to car.
—Shannon E.
- **Dress for success.** Allow your child to choose outfits for school. The night before, lay out two outfit choices and let him pick which one to wear.
—Shannon E.

Teacher Talk

A crucial step in preparing for preschool is frequent communication with the teacher. When you know what happens at school, you can help your child know what to expect.

- **Be in the know.** My child's distress comes in the morning before getting ready for school. He asks and whines if it is a school day. I've noticed that when I rehearse all the things that they will do at school, the anxiety goes away quickly.
—Rosie H.
- **Ask the teacher.** Ask about daily activities and lesson plans. Then you have specific things to talk about. If you make a picture schedule, your child can write or draw on it or just move stickers to one section of the schedule to show you what they remember doing that day.
—Shannon E.
- **Volunteer to help.** Offer to pick up big picture books at the library on a topic of the teacher's choice. Go to a used bookstore, and buy inexpensive board books that her class can keep. Donate crafts supplies. Read to the kids or help out with a field trip.
—Shannon E.

Be Confident

Your child can sense your anxiety so while preparing for preschool, project an image of calmness and contentment.

- **Know what's normal.** Having taught preschool for 12 years now, I have seen a great many different reactions to the drop-off. It is completely normal for kids to struggle with the morning routine. This is the age when children begin to comprehend more about relationships, routines, and how to act. Sometimes they seek extra attention because they

enjoy those last few minutes of love from you.

—Katherine C.

- **Keep it simple.** Keep your goodbye routine short and simple, and do not linger. Be confident in your child's new surroundings, because they will pick up on your insecurities.

—Kelly M.

FEATURED BOOK



BOARD BOOK

I'm Not Tired!: A Bedtime Routine Book

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