



Transition to Kindergarten

A Workshop Co-Sponsored by Edina Family Center and Parent Communication Network

Kindergarten is one of many milestones for children and parents. Like other transitions, it can be a time of exciting mixed emotions and a bit of instability. Here are some tips to get everyone on track for a good school year.

Easing the transition to kindergarten:

- ❖ Visit the school –consider attending an all school family event during the spring i.e. carnival, picnic; play on the playground during the summer months; attend the open house
- ❖ Schedule an early conference to get to know the teacher and to acquaint your child with the room
- ❖ Share memories of school experiences with your child
- ❖ Read books and play games about school
- ❖ Have a positive attitude about starting elementary school
- ❖ Let your child know you believe in them and know kindergarten will be a good place for them

Moving through the transition to kindergarten:

- ❖ Breathe, kindergarten is yet another bitter-sweet transition
- ❖ Tucking a lovey or small token from home in a back pack can often help an anxious kindergartner
- ❖ Creating routines can help ease the transition back home after school
- ❖ Expect kindergartners to be tired and possibly crabby after school, evaluate carefully the number of extra curricular activities for your child
- ❖ Play and exercise are essential after school activities
- ❖ Be ready to listen and wait to hear stories of the day
 - Some children begin chatting as they descend from the bus
 - Other children need some time before they share about their day
- ❖ Ask open ended questions such as:
 - What was your favorite activity today?
 - What did you like least about your day?
 - What do you like about your teacher?
 - How do you think your teacher would describe the day at school?
 - If you could change one thing at school today, what would it be?
 - What are you looking forward to in school tomorrow?
- ❖ Enough sleep and good nutrition continue to be important for a smooth transition and a successful school experience
- ❖ Let your child's teacher know of any issues that may affect your child's day
- ❖ Get to know your child's teacher and ask how they prefer to receive communication
- ❖ Consider being a part of the school PTA

- ❖ Volunteer in the classroom if you are able
- ❖ Talk with your child about his/her classmates and how to be a good friend/schoolmate:
 - Who is a good friend at school and what do you like to do together?
 - Who would you like to get to know better?
 - Who seems to be left out and how can you include them?
 - Are you a good friend at school?
- ❖ Encourage play dates
- ❖ Connect with other parents in your child's class
- ❖ Consider joining the once-a-month kindergarten parent education class at the Edina Family Center (Beyond ECFE catalog for classes will be available online mid May at www.edina.k12.mn.us/community/familycenter)

Ten Hallmarks of Children Who Succeed in School:

1. They are eager to learn.
 2. They ask a lot of questions and they ask for help.
 3. They work hard and know that their effort matters.
 4. They have well developed social and emotional skills.
 5. They are good at assessing their skills.
 6. Their parents are good role models for learning.
 7. Their parents promote learning by "natural" teaching at home.
 8. Their family routines support doing well at school.
 9. Their parents are effective at setting and maintaining limits.
 10. Their schools have high expectations for student achievement, support teacher development, and communicate frequently with parents about their children.
- (S.L. Ramey, PhD and C. T. Ramey, Ph.D.)

The Minnesota Department of Education hosts an innovative and interactive website for parents. The ParentsKnow Website provides resources on child development, parent education, child care and consumer safety information and includes links to MDE and other trusted websites. Check it out at: www.MNParentsKnow.info.

"Parental expectations are among the most powerful predictors of children's adjustment to school."

National Association for the Education of Young Children