



OTTAWA-CARLETON
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Welcome to Kindergarten

Assist Your Child's Adjustment to School

Children who have watched older siblings and playmates begin school are likely to greet this new experience with excitement and joy. However, it is perfectly normal for children to feel uncertain when attending school for the first time. Here are some ways you can help prepare your child for kindergarten.

Read to your child, preferably daily. Select a variety of books of different lengths and different subjects. Relate the pictures to the story. This enhances language development and stimulates children's curiosity and imagination.

Talk with your child about daily activities — what he/she is doing; what you are doing. Strong oral communication skills will become a solid foundation for later academic achievement.

Encourage other adults in your child's life to emphasize the positive aspects of school: new friends, a caring teacher, and opportunities to learn, grow, and have fun. Find out the teacher's name and use it when discussing school activities.

Recognize it is sometimes just as difficult for you to face the separation from your child as it is for your child to face separation from you. Take comfort from understanding that these feelings are normal and they will pass as you and your child grow accustomed to a new routine.

Discover the route your child will travel to and from school and obtain information on walking distances. Several dress rehearsals will build your child's confidence and help establish safety conscious routines. Make sure the child walking to school is accompanied by an adult. Children on buses are met on arrival at, and departure from, school by the teacher or school supervisor. Children must be met by an adult when they are dropped off following their day at school. Visit the school. Use the playground and apparatus.

Develop opportunities for your child's exposure to music, rhythm and rhyming activities which help the development of reading skills.

Accustom your child to consistent routines such as getting up at a certain time, getting dressed, and so forth.

Help your child to develop fine motor skills. Fine motor skills are those skills involving the small muscles of the body and include such activities as drawing, cutting and gluing, as well as handling Playdough, building towers of blocks, stringing large beads on a string, catching a beanbag or large ball.

Discuss personal safety, busing, and strangers. Be sure children know their name, address, and telephone number.

Review the calendar with your child. Circle the day on which your child starts school. You may also wish to mark gym and library days, class trips, birthdays, and special occasions.

Label all your child's belongings in an inconspicuous place: indoor and outdoor clothing, shoes, boots, snack container, drink container, and backpack.

Prepare your child for successful experiences. Provide opportunities at home with situations that challenge your child to manage alone when toileting, dressing, tidying, and eating. Such independence helps children feel good about themselves. It helps them realize they can solve their own problems and be supported while doing so.

Find the time and the patience to let your child work through these challenges:

- choosing clothes to wear
- putting both arms into a jacket without assistance
- zipping a coat independently
- putting shoes on the correct feet
- fastening shoes and boots
- turning on water so it runs slowly
- pouring sand or liquids into containers
- soaking up liquids with a sponge
- using only a little glue
- cutting with children's scissors
- defining which space or materials belong to whom
- finding and stating answers to questions in her or his own way.
- holding a pencil or crayon

Provide opportunities for your child to play with other children.

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