



Top 10 Tips for Parents

School Readiness from birth through kindergarten

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There are lots of things parents can do to help children get ready for kindergarten. In fact, parents begin setting the stage for their child's educational success far earlier than they might realize – from birth. Parents are their child's first teachers, teaching life's most basic lessons early and at home.

Regardless of your child's age, there are things you can do now to help him or her be successful in kindergarten.

- 1. Bond!** School Readiness starts at birth. Give lots of love and meet your baby's needs to help him form his most important relationship – with you.
- 2. Build skills!** Become familiar with the predictable stages of childhood and encourage your baby/child to try new things and build skills at her own pace, while keeping her safe at the same time. Remember individual children reach developmental milestones at different times.
- 3. Set boundaries!** Set age appropriate boundaries and loving limits so your child knows what to expect and how to behave. Establishing regular routines such as bed times, teeth brushing, etc. helps children do better socially and in school.
- 4. Get help!** Take care of yourself so you can give your best to your child. This includes having friends, going to a mommies group, and getting support when times get tough.
- 5. Read!** Read for fun as a family...and read with children early and often to help them think creatively, learn new words and add to their language skills. When your child is ready, read books about going to Kindergarten. Reading is a very important skill connected to doing well in school.
- 6. Play!** Play with your child and watch him learn! Playing is the natural way for a child to explore, get creative, and start developing academic and social skills.
- 7. Make friends!** Help your child learn how to get along with others by playing with other children. Early experiences with different adults and children help children get along with classmates and teachers at school.
- 8. Monitor health!** Keep your baby/child healthy with nutritious food, enough sleep, safe places to play, and regular medical care (including immunizations!).
- 9. Go to quality preschool!** Help your child get ready to be a good learner in kindergarten by going to a quality preschool. Preschool programs work on early academic and social skills.
- 10. Move on to kindergarten!** Make your child's move to kindergarten a great one – for both of you! Some kindergarten transition tips include:
 - Find out as much as you can about your child's new school *before* the first day
 - Take your child to see the new school
 - Take your child to visit her new teacher and classroom
 - Talk with your child about what to expect – this can help ease stressful feelings he may have about this new part of his life.

Parents aren't the only ones who help children get ready for school. Entire communities share this job. Friends, neighbors, child care providers, health professionals, elected officials and government agencies, businesses, schools, and others all play a role. But, as the child's first teacher, parents play the most important role. The first 5 years are when the groundwork for future development and learning is laid.

Learn more about School Readiness: www.first5shasta.org