



Getting Ready for Kindergarten

(Helping your child get a successful start to school)



This is just a little advice from a person who has taught Kindergarten for many years and has raised children of her own. I definitely don't know everything, but I remember when my oldest child started school and how some of this wisdom, passed along to me, helped. Good luck!

1. Bedtime Back-up (Start TONIGHT if your child stays up late)

- Start with bedtime at 8:30.
- Back-up in 15 minute increments each day until you get to **7:30 or 7:00**. 7:00 or 7:30 means lights out—your child will be tired! Children need a good night's sleep to be able to learn. Once they are in bed, you will have a moment to catch up on texts, e-mails and other jobs.

2. Start a bedtime routine

- Start TONIGHT, if you don't already have one. Don't wait until the week before school starts.
- Have your child **shower/take a bath** every day—this helps relax them and also removes some of the germs they've encountered at school.
- Have your child **pick out their clothes** the night before and have them laying out.
- Have your child **pack their backpack** (library book, show and tell, etc.) the night before and have it sitting by the door they go out of in the morning.
- If your child takes their **lunch** to school, let them help you **pack it the night before** and put it in the refrigerator until morning.
- Read 2-3 stories** to your child each night. Even if your child is reading, **they still need to be read to**—this increases comprehension, vocabulary and your kids will remember it forever.

3. Morning Routine

- Have your child use a **friendly alarm clock or gentle music** to wake up to.
- Eat a **good breakfast**—Most important meal of the day!
- For children with **long hair—put it up!**
 - Use tea tree oil shampoo and product (mousse, hairspray, etc.)—lice don't like either of these.
 - Ponytails, pigtails, buns, braids, barrettes—help keep lice away.
- Talk with your child about any changes** to their regular routine—so they know what is going on.
"You have dance after school and Aunt Susie will pick you up and take you there."
- Remind your child to take their **backpack** to school—**EVERYDAY**.

4. After School Routine

- Help get out their school folder and **look at work and notes together**.
- Your child explaining their work and school routines IS the homework.
- Empty school folder daily**.
- Put **notes you have for the teacher** or the office in your child's school folder.
- Remind your student to give their teacher the notes.
- WRITTEN notes for the teacher are best**—teachers (and substitutes when there) can see, remember and post the information.
- Pick-up** (if your child goes to After Care):

-First day/week—pick-up right after school, if possible. They are so tired and worn out and need to go home and rest/recharge with no distractions.

-Second 2 weeks, pick up between 3:45-5:00 from after care. They still need time at home to relax.

-Rest of school year, try to pick-up by 5:30. They have been up and busy since 6:30 am (or so) and need time at home to eat supper and play before the bedtime routine begins.

5. Start a supper/dinner menu

-Have food at home, ready to go.

-Write a menu each weekend and place on the refrigerator so your children can see/read it. Ask your children for menu ideas and to help write the menu.

-Get a copy of the school lunch menu and hang it on your refrigerator. School lunches are convenient and very nutritious.

6. Play a game right before/after supper a couple of times a week

-Cards—Go Fish, Old Maid, Slap Jack, etc.

-Board games—Candyland, Chutes and Ladders, Hi Ho Cherry-O, etc.

Games are shown to help brain development in children.

7. Limit screen time

-Limit television viewing to 1 show per day. (On school days)

-20 minutes or less on ipad. (On school days)

They will get enough of this throughout life and too much is not good for brain development.

-Try to turn off electronics 30 minutes or more before bed time.

8. Practical Advice

-Pick out a backpack that is large enough to hold their folder, lunchbox and possibly a jacket.

-Get an inexpensive waterbottle (incase the waterbottle gets lost) for your child that is small/medium size.

Please think about a non-metal waterbottle (they make a lot of noise in classrooms) and get one that your child can easily open.

-Get shoes your child can take off and put on independently (think about Velcro/shoelaces).

-Have your child wear clothes (jackets/sweaters, etc.) they can take off and put on independently.

-Talk to your child about situations that might come up at school (talking through things will give your child confidence in the classroom)-

“What can you do if you can’t open something in your lunch?”

“What should you do if your teacher doesn’t always call on you?”

“What should you do if the teacher is talking privately with another student?”

-Talk to your child about what it will be like to have about 20 students in their class.

“Tell me about some of your new friends. What are their names.”

“What can you do while you are waiting.”

***Remember one of the best things you can do for your child (and the relationship you have with your child) is give them your undivided attention (no cell phones, tablets or tv). You will thank yourself 10 years down the road for doing this!!**