

What Can I Do at Home? Parent Guide #16

As your child's first teacher you have a key role. You can help your child prepare for school and life success.

The quantity and quality of time you spend with your child matters. You can do some things to help your child be better prepared for school while having fun.

- **READ every day.** Share your love of books with your child. Research shows there are benefits from reading to your child for 30 minutes a day. It does not have to be done all at once.
- **TALK and LISTEN.** When you talk and listen with your child, he/she builds language and learns needed skills.
- **WORDS. Use as many words as possible to describe things in your child's world.** The number of words your child knows relates to his/her later reading success. Don't use 'baby talk.' If your child makes mistakes in grammar, repeat the word correctly.
- **RESPECT.** Be respectful with your child and others. Your child learns from watching you. Make sure your actions are ones you want your child to repeat.
- **PLAY with your children.** Let them see you as a playful person. Remember that play *is* a child's work. Children solve problems and learn new skills through play.

- **HELP your child see herself/himself as a capable person.** Help build self-esteem by pointing out all the things your child does 'right.' Make an effort to look for the good in your child. Help your child see how wonderful she/he is.
- **COOK with your child.** Measure, pour, stir, read the recipe, clean up, and eat with your child. Cooking activities are good ways to work small muscles. These muscles are used later to write.
- **COLOR and draw with your child.** This will improve his or her fine motor skills and help prepare the muscles in the fingers for writing.

ASK for help. If you are concerned about your child's development in any area, and he or she is under the age of three, call 1-800-*Early On*. If your child is over the age of three, contact Build Up Michigan (<http://buildupmi.org>), your local school district, or the Michigan Department of Education, Office of Special Education, at 1-888-320-8384.

How Can I Help My Child Ease Those First Day Jitters? Parent Guide #18

Positive attitudes go a long way.

- Your child will feel your confidence in his/her ability to succeed.
- Your child is influenced by the things you say and do. He/she also sees the feelings you show.
- It is important that you are happy and excited about your child starting kindergarten. Your child will follow your lead.
- There are many good books to read together to get ready for the first day of school.

Breakfast is fuel for your child's body.

A good way for your child to have energy through the day is to give him/her a healthy breakfast. This meal is important because your child's body needs the "fuel" to get going in the morning. Numerous studies show that children who eat breakfast daily have better school records and better attitudes. The fuel gained from a healthy breakfast also helps with memory.

Choices are empowering.

Let your child make choices about school clothes, food and school supplies. This can help him/her feel more confident and in control. This also increases his/her independence skills.

Morning rush hour can be avoided.

- Waking up with enough time to get ready for school makes your home more relaxed. This helps

your child feel more comfortable.

- Setting out clothes and supplies the night before works well for many families.

Saying goodbye is better than the "disappearing act."

- Leaving your child that first day might be difficult. Studies show that a loving but firm goodbye is the best way to go.
- Comfort him/her and let him/her know the next time he/she will see you. Don't make your child feel awkward when he/she is upset to see you go.
- The teacher can help with good ideas before the first day of school.

How Can I Help My Child Become a Reader? Parent Guide #17

Learning to read and write is important to a child's success in school and life. Often the subject of reading gets all the attention. It's important to know that reading involves more than just sitting down with a good book.

To help a child become a good reader, he/she must be exposed to all the areas of literacy. Reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing are all key parts to helping children master and love reading.

- Speak to your child every day. Use many words to share your thoughts and ideas. The number of words children know makes a difference in learning to read.
- Listen to what your child has to say. If you listen well, your child will talk more. Sometimes it takes a long time to put words together to tell a story, so be patient.
- Write down a story your child tells you and read it out loud together. Ask your child to draw pictures that go with the words.
- Introduce your children to their written names. Help them learn to write their names with upper and lowercase letters.
- Let your child see you enjoy reading. Often children love when we read to them. Read the newspaper, magazines, advertisements, and mail aloud.
- Sing with your child. Words are repeated in songs so singing is a wonderful way to learn words and hear rhymes.
- Make up stories about your child's daily activities. Use your

child as a character in the story. Children love to hear about themselves and their own adventures. They can be real or make believe. Have your child add details to the story.

- Have paper and writing tools available. Be an example by modeling writing throughout the day (letters, shopping lists, to-do lists, etc.). Know that your child's first scribbles and pictures are writing experiences. Have your child read his/her writing to you.

Read to your child every day! Research shows that reading 30 minutes each day with your child will help her/him become a better reader.

- Encourage your child to read to you. All children can share what they know about reading by telling a story and reading pictures.
- Help your child understand important book concepts. Point out the title, front of the book, author, illustrator, back of the book, pictures, words on a page and punctuation.
- When you read, explain that the words on a page are read from left to right. You may want to move your finger over the words as you read them.
- Before you turn to the next page, ask your child to predict what might happen. Give plenty of time to think about the possibilities before you give adult answers.

Reading to your child – continued

- Ask your child to help you read the words that repeat on his/her favorite pages. Read with different voices for the characters. Encourage your child to do the same.
- Notice your child's skills at reading signs in his/her surroundings. Labels, milk cartons, pictures on cereal boxes, stop signs, and store signs are a great place to start.
- Reading the same story over is good for your child. Children love to hear their old favorites over and over again.
- Children will watch your face for excitement or surprise about the story. Your voice will show that you love reading with your child.
- You have always been your child's first teacher. Keep up the good work.

Are There Books to Read to Get My Child Ready for Kindergarten? Parent Guide #19

Here are some great books that are fun. They can help your child be aware of the kindergarten routines:

Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Kindergarten-But Didn't

Know Who to Ask (http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0590936026/qid=1126148286/sr=1-1/ref=sr_1_1/104-9768203-6276734?v=glance&s=books)

Ellen Booth Church

First Day of School (http://www.amazon.com/dp/006050191X/ref=rdr_ext_tmb)

Anne F. Rockwell

Get Set for Kindergarten!

(http://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb_sb_noss?url=search-alias%3Dstripbooks&field-keywords=Get+Set+for+Kindergarten%2C+Rosemary+Wells&rh=n%3A283155%252)

Rosemary Wells

Series includes six books: Adding It Up, Letters and Sounds, How Many?, Discover and Explore, Ready to Read, The World Around Us

The Kissing Hand (http://www.amazon.com/Kissing-Hand-CD-Audio/dp/0756992990/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1360701137&sr=1-1&keywords=the+kissing+hand)

Audrey Penn

Look Out Kindergarten, Here I Come! (Picture Puffins)

(http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0140568387/qid=1126148954/sr=2-1/ref=pd_bbs_b_2_1/104-9768203-6276734?v=glance&s=books)

Nancy L. Carlson

Miss Bindergarten Gets Ready for Kindergarten

(<http://www.amazon.com/Miss-Bindergarten-Ready-Kindergarten-Books/dp/0140562737>)

Joseph Slate, Author and Ashley Wolff, Illustrator

Mom, It's My First Day of Kindergarten! (<http://www.amazon.com/Mom-Its-First-Day-Kindergarten/dp/0374350043>)

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The Night Before Kindergarten (http://www.amazon.com/Night-Before-Kindergarten-Natasha-Wing/dp/0448425009/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1364991398&sr=1-1&keywords=the+night+before+kindergarten+by+natasha+wing)
Natasha Wing and Julie Durrell

Seven Little Mice Go to School (http://www.amazon.com/Seven-Little-Mice-Go-School/dp/0735840121/ref=sr_1_fkmr0_2?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1359492687&sr=1-2-fkmr0&keywords=Seven+Little+Mice+Go+to+School+by+Haruo+Yamashita)
Haruo Yamashita

Tiptoe Into Kindergarten (http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0439485924/qid=1126148717/sr=2-1/ref=pd_bbs_b_2_1/104-9768203-6276734?v=glance&s=books)
Jacqueline Rogers

We Love Our School (<http://www.amazon.com/We-Love-Our-School-Read-Together/dp/0375867287>)
Judy Sierra

Welcome to Kindergarten (http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0802776647/qid=1126149131/sr=2-1/ref=pd_bbs_b_2_1/104-9768203-6276734?v=glance&s=books)
Anne Rockwell

Will I Have a Friend (http://www.amazon.com/Will-Have-Friend-First-Grade/dp/1595720693/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1360700994&sr=1-1&keywords=will+i+have+a+friend+by+miriam+cohen)
Miriam Cohen