

# Kindergarten...



# Here We Come!

***Resources and Activities for Parents and  
Caregivers of Next Year's Kindergarten Students***

# Kindergarten... Here We Come!

## About this Guide

Your very special preschooler will be entering kindergarten soon. This is a big and exciting step for both you and your child. It can be a bit scary.

Parents often wonder what their children will need to know to be ready for kindergarten level learning. Children sometimes worry too about what to expect when they go to “big school” for the first time.

This guide is designed to help you in the coming months to support your child as she or he prepares for kindergarten and to prepare for the process of entering school

Kindergarten...Here We Come! Was developed by Child Care Solutions, Onondaga and Cayuga Counties' Child Care Resource and Referral agency. The program has been modified by the S2AY Rural Health Network's Regional Early Childhood Coalition to make the information applicable to our service area.



*“There are two lasting bequests we can give our children. One is roots. The other is wings”*

*-Hooding Carter, Jr.*

## Quality Early Childhood Programs

Children begin Learning at birth. The things children learn in the first four years of their lives will help them be ready for kindergarten learning.

Children learn at home with their families and in early childhood programs. Finding an early childhood program that meets your child's needs is important. Visit programs in person so you can make a good choice, for you and your family.

Talk with the director or provider and the adults who will be working with your child. Observe the classrooms. Listen for sounds of children talking with others, singing, and other happy noise. Here are other suggestions of what to look for when you visit::



### The Teachers:

- Have backgrounds in early childhood education and experience working with young children
- Participate in ongoing training
- Are warm and caring toward children and parents

### The Environment:

- Is clean, organized, and safe
- Is pleasant and comfortable— look for child artwork and child-sized furnishing
- Has a sufficient amount of interesting, challenging toys and materials
- Has an outdoor play space that is well-maintained

### The Program:

- Has a clear, consistent daily routine
- Focuses on helping children build social skills with their peers
- Provides group activities and time for children to explore their own interests
- Provides many opportunities for children to experience language through out the day ( listening to stories, talking with teachers and other children, exploring writing and drawing materials)
- Provides hands— on learning

# September

## It's All About Language

Reading and writing are based on spoken language. The words children hear and use when they listen and speak are the same words they will read and write when they go to school.

Children who understand and use any words will be most ready for reading and writing. You can help by using rich language with your child. Rich language can come from reading books, singing, having conversations and playing with the same sounds in words.

Your library is a wonderful source of books, and your child can get his or her own library card. You can talk every day with your child and take turns talking and listening. These conversations will help your child see that language is important and that she has ideas to share.

*"The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go."*



## Know Your Child Best

You know what your child is interested in. Tell the children's librarian at your local library, and he or she will help find all kinds of books that will be just perfect for your child.

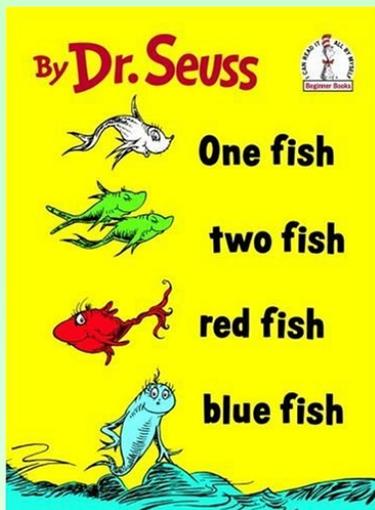


## *Ideas and Suggestions*

- Talk about what your child is doing– getting dressed, eating, playing with toys or going for a walk. Take turns so both of you listen and talk.
- Sing with your Preschooler. Sing songs your preschooler knows and make up your own. Don't worry about your own singing voice. Your child doesn't care about that!
- Make up stories with your child. These stories can be about anything your child is interested in such as favorite toys adventures, family members.
- Read lots of rhyming books! Have your child say the rhymes with you and fill in rhyming words when you leave them off.

### ***Song and Chant Books:***

Five Little Ducks **by Raffi**  
Brown Bear Brown Bear What Do You See? **By Bill Martin Jr.**  
Chicka Chicka Boom Boom **by Bill Martin Jr. and John Archambault**



### ***Rhyming books:***

Green Eggs and Ham **by Dr. Seuss**  
One Fish Two Fish Red Fish Blue Fish **by Dr. Seuss**  
Each Peach Pear Plum **by J. Aklberg**  
Time for Bed **by Mem Fox**  
Pass the Fritters Critters **by Cheryl Chapman**  
Mother Goose Nursey Rhymes

### **Monthly Activities:**

- Make green eggs and ham for a meal.
- Play ( Child's name) (Child's name) what do you see?  
Have the child describe something and you guess what it is.
- Go on a number scavenger hunt at the store.
- Read your favorite mother Goose rhyme and practice saying it together

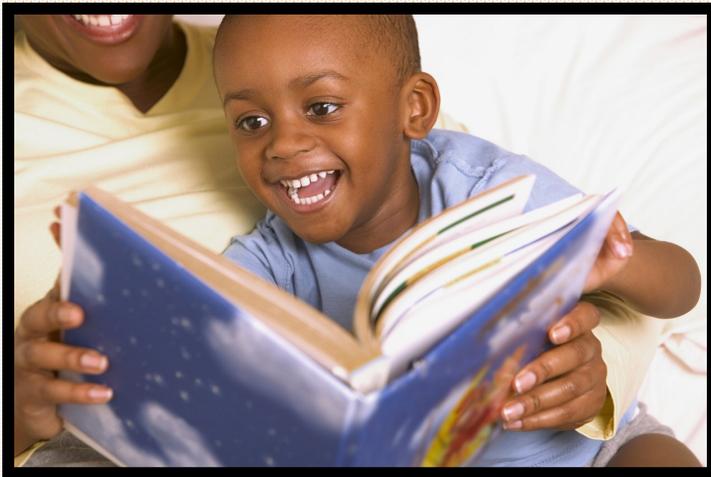
# OCTOBER

## Reading and Writing

Parents want their children to be ready to read and write because they know how important this will be in school. It takes time to learn to read and write. You can do so much to help your child's language skills grow.

Children who see print all around them- books, magazines, even print on food labels- learn that print has meaning. They begin to ask questions about letters and follow along when you read to them.

Learning to write starts with drawing and having children talk about their drawings. As your child draws and sees you write, he learns that writing has meaning. He will want to write his own lists and notes. Your child will be most interested in reading and writing when he or she sees that you read and write too.



## Resource

[www.rif.org](http://www.rif.org) ( Reading is Fundamental)

## You Know Your Child Best

You know how your child likes you to read books to them - whether it's using special voices as you read, letting them turn the pages, asking them questions while you read or letting them read to you. Cuddle up with your child and read a book in the special ways you know your child likes.

## Ideas and Suggestions

- Notice signs wherever you go. Point them out and read the words to your child. Print is everywhere!
- Show your child the print on food boxes and labels in your home. Point out the letters and read them with your child. You can even make books out of fronts of food boxes. These will be books your child reads all by himself!
- Give your child different kinds of paper and crayons, pencils and markers to make writing fun
- Cuddle up with your child and read. Children love to hear their favorite books again and again.
- Visit the library and bring home books your child has chosen.

## October Activities

- find things on a nature walk that begin with a certain letter
- Make letters by tracing or gluing cereal to an outline
- Count how many of a certain letter you can find in a favorite book
- Make up your own A to Z alphabet book with hand drawn pictures or magazine cut outs.



## Children's Books About Reading and Writing

The day of Ahmed's Secrets *by Ted Lewin*  
A Letter to Amy *by Ezra Jack Keats*

### Alphabet Books

The Z was Zapped *by Chris Van Allsburg*  
Dr. Seuss's ABS's *by Dr. Seuss*

# NOVEMBER

## Math: Numbers and More

Your child is learning about math and numbers long before she learns to add and subtract in school. She sees shapes and patterns at home and in nature. She sees you using a scale to weigh fruit at the store. She hears you talk about how much things cost. She compares the size of her piece of cake with someone else's !

As your child learns to count, help her count objects rather than just saying number words from memory. Help your child understand “ how many” by guessing how many hair barrettes fit in the box or how long the chicken will take to cook. As your child has real-world experiences, she will begin to understand numbers, size and sorting. These early math experiences will help her solve more complex math problems later in life.

## You Know Your Child Best

You know what your child loves to help you with. You can give them math experiences in everyday tasks. If they like to help put groceries away, have them put all the boxes together and all the cans together. If they like setting the table, have them put one fork and one spoon next to each plate.

## Resource

[www.pbs.org/parents/earlymath](http://www.pbs.org/parents/earlymath) (PBS Parents)



*“Imagination, curiosity, wonder, the pleasure of discovery and the thrill of exchanging ideas, these are fuel for science and math.”*

-Allison Lutton

## Books that Explore Math

*Who Sank the Boat?* By Pamela Allen  
*The Greedy Triangle* by Marilyn Burns  
*The Doorbell Rang* by Pat Hutchins  
*Inch by Inch* by Leo Lionni  
*How Much Is a Million?* By David M Schwartz  
*Anno's Counting Book* by Mitsumasa Anno  
*Henry the Fourth* by Stuart Murphy  
*Missing Mittens* by Stuart Murphy  
*On the Stairs* by Julie Hofstrand Larios  
*One Odd Day* by Doris Fisher and Dani Sneed  
*Shapes, Shapes, Shapes, More, Fewer, & Is it Larger? Is it Smaller?* By Tana Hoban



## Ideas and Suggestions

- Point out shapes in your home: The clock is a circle, the pizza slice is a triangle, the window is a rectangle.
- Cook or bake with your child. He can help measure, set the timer, and divide the food among family members.
- Sort the laundry together. Choose categories like size, color, texture, etc.
- Use words such as “more”, “less”, “bigger”, “smaller”, “equal”, “shorter”, “longer”, “same”, and “different”.
- Ask your child a math problem. “How many plates will we need for you, Mommy Daddy and Grandma?” or “There are ten orange slices. How many should you and your brother each get?”

## November Activities

- Read or tell the story of the Gingerbread Man. Cut out two gingerbread men from paper or cardboard (inside of a cereal box). Using cereal and glue, have your child decorate their men the same...identical twins.
- Draw your child's name in shaving cream on the kitchen counter (Print capital letter at the beginning and lower case for the rest). Have your child make their own name in shaving cream after your example.
- Use bath time for science. Grab some items that you know might float or sink. Have your child predict “float” or “sink” and let them test it in the tub water.



# MATH



# December

## Making Decisions

Good decision making is learned, just like other skills. Your four-year old child can begin to learn how to make everyday decisions.

Of course, you make the important decisions about your child's health safety and behavior. There are other decisions that are important to your child, but don't matter to you. Allowing your child to make small decisions now gives them practice to make bigger decisions as he gets older.

It's best to provide your child with only two choices. When there are more choices, it is harder to choose. Remember that you are allowing your child to choose. So both choices must be okay to you!

## You Know Your Child Best

You know what kinds of choices are important to your child. Let them practice decision-making with those. Here are some to consider:

- choosing to have a sandwich cut in squares or triangles
- Choosing between outfits to wear
- Choosing between a banana or an apple for another snack.

*"Making good decisions is a crucial skill at every level."*



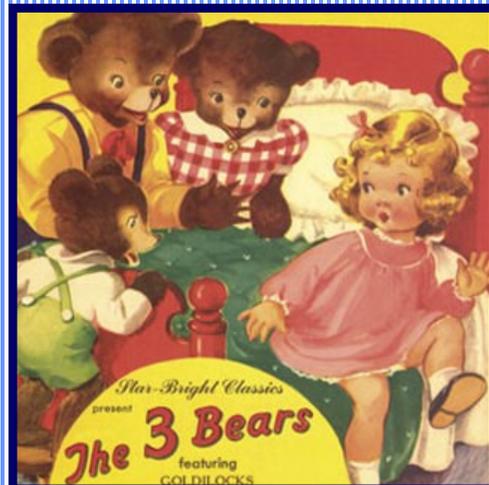
## Resource

[www.yourparentingsolutions.com](http://www.yourparentingsolutions.com) (Aha! Parenting)



## December Activities

- Tell the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears. Then have your child draw a picture of something from the beginning, middle and end of the story
- Look for shapes in the house: circle, square, triangle. Draw what you see and make a shape book.
- Make instant pudding together. Measure the milk, mix and pour the ingredients into paper cups, insert plastic spoons and freeze for snacks. How many did we make, if you eat one, how many are left?
- Gather together some items/toys. Using the words: large-larger-largest, small-smaller-smallest, ask: "Please find \_\_\_\_\_ toy", until all the words are used.



# January



## Learning to Solve Problems

When your child was two, you may have seen her pretending a block was a phone or trying to fit a piece in a puzzle. Your child was playing, but she was also solving problems. Now that she is older she is ready to solve other kinds of problems.

When your child is having trouble solving a problem, you might want to “fix” it for her. But don’t hurry to solve every problem. Talk about it with her and help her to come up with her own solution.

Being able to solve problems is important to school success. It is worth your time to help your child be a problem solver.

## You Know Your Child Best

It’s hard for some children to solve problems. They can become angry or give up when a problem is hard. Help Your child learn to talk about her anger or her frustration so she can get on with solving the problem.

## Resource

<http://actagainstviolence.apa.org>  
(Adults and Children Together  
Against Violence)

*“Too often we give children answers to remember rather than problems to solve.”*

-Roger Lewin

## Ideas and suggestions

Practice problem solving with your child with these steps:

- **Identify the problem**—Talk about the situation. Brothers Derek and Anthony are arguing over the last cracker. You say, “It looks like there is only one cracker left and you both want it.”
- **Identify the emotions of each person**— Discuss how each person feels. “You look angry about this.”
- **Think of possible solutions** - Take turns and name as many as possible. Derek says he should eat the cracker and Anthony can have an apple instead. Anthony has two ideas. He says they should both have pretzels and they can split the cracker.
- **Choose a solution both people can agree on.** The brothers agree to split the cracker. It is important that everyone feels the solution is fair.
- **Implement the solution**— Follow through! Your child may forget what he has agreed to do. You may need to remind him.



## January Activities

- Make 3 forts ( use pillows for one, blankets for another, chairs for the last) and play out the 3 Little Pig Story.
- Make an emotion collage with pictures from magazines ( many libraries have some free ones available) and talk about what to do when you feel that way.
- Play out emotions in front of a mirror and you both try to guess what emotion the other person is showing.
- Make a puzzle out of a cereal box and work on putting it together.

## Books about problem-solving:

Where is Gah-Ning? By Robert Munsch  
Uncle Jed’s Barbershop by Margaree King Mitchell  
Three Little Pigs by David Wiesner  
When Emily Woke Up Angry by Riana Duncan

# February

## Registering for Kindergarten

Pre-registration makes starting kindergarten smoother for everyone. Most school districts hold kindergarten registration in the spring before school starts in the fall.

Children can register on the first day of school, but it is easier to register ahead of time. Starting school goes better when the school knows your child is coming.

The school will assign your child to a class and a teacher. Details about transportation and lunch can be worked out ahead of time. Your child will feel less stress about starting school when she knows what class she is in and feels welcomed.

Registering early also gives the school a chance to share important information with you. Knowing what to expect makes it easier to support your child.



*“ If ever there is tomorrow when were not together, there is something you must always remember. You are braver than you believe, stronger than you seem and smarter than you think. But the most important thing is, even if we’re apart, I’ll always be with you.”*

*-Winnie the Pooh,  
By A.A Milne*

## You Know Your Child Best

Some children will be very excited to start Kindergarten. They will want to jump right in and do everything. Some will be cautious and need time to adjust. Others will be in between. Take your cue from your child and follow his lead. This will help him feel more confident and comfortable.

### Resource

[http://www.education.com/reference/article/Ref\\_parents\\_successful/](http://www.education.com/reference/article/Ref_parents_successful/)  
(Parent Guide to Successful Kindergarten)

## Books About Starting Kindergarten

Franklin Goes to School by Paulette Bourgeois

The Berenstain Bears go to School by Jan and Stan Berenstain

Miss Bindergarten Gets Ready for Kindergarten by Joseph Slate

Off to School Baby Duck by Amy Hest

Welcome to Kindergarten by Anne Rockwell

## Documents

Here is a list of the documents you will need to pre-register your child for kindergarten:

- Your child's birth certificate
- Proof of your address ( lease, utility bill, drivers license)
- Child's medical records if you have them. These are not usually required until the first day of school. But it is helpful to have this taken care of early

Your child will need:

**A physical exam by his or her doctor.** The doctor will know about this. The exam must be done during the year before your child starts kindergarten. You can get the forms at your child's school.

**Proof of Immunization.** There is a requirement for all school districts in NY state. Your Child's doctor will know what immunizations are required to enter school.



## February Activities

- Play school ( use special paper, markers, pens, pencils, whatever you have around the house) and create your own mini school
- Make friendship hearts to give your child's friends. It could be a heart with a picture or words they trace.
- Visit your child's school playground so they can get familiar with it and gain confidence on the equipment there.
- Make a poster showcasing your child's talents and likes to share with their teacher ( favorite color, song, toy etc).



# March

## School Information for Kindergarten Registration

The time to pre-register your child for kindergarten is getting closer. The time and place for kindergarten registration is different in each school district.

Many districts conduct a screening or readiness assessment of your child during registration or some time before school starts. A few districts do these screenings after school begins in September

Many schools also have kindergarten orientation sessions for parents and children. These are usually held in the school building where your child will be attending kindergarten. Ask about orientation sessions when you register.

## Here are some questions to ask when you register your child:

- When does the school day start and end?
- Can my child get transportation to and from school?
- Will the pick-up and drop-off be at my home or somewhere in the neighborhood?
  - Will the bus take my child to her child care after school?
  - Does the school have before and after school programs on-site for kindergarteners?
- How does the lunch or snack program work?
- Can my child and I visit the kindergarten class before school ends this year?
- Will I be able to stay with my child during the readiness assessment?

*“The first and most important step to success is the feeling that we can succeed.”*

- Nelson Boswell

## March Activities

- House search... find items for every color of their rainbow: red, orange, yellow, green, blue and purple.
- Locate, identify, and practice using all the clothing fasteners you and your child can find.
- Organize story books by category (animals, cars, ABC books, nursery rhymes, Authors, etc.) and stack them on the bookshelf.
- Find all the balls in the house and talk about their size, color, texture and weight. Roll them down an inclined board and see which one rolls the farthest.



# April

*“ And it is still true, no matter how old you are, when you go out into the world it is better to hold hands and stick together.”*  
- Robert Fulghum



## Learning to Cooperate

Your child is learning how other people think and feel. They are around other people in many places. They build important social skills when they cooperate with others. They learn about taking turns and sharing. They learn how to talk with other children and how to listen to them. They learn about working together.

When you see them work with others, tell them what they did well. “ You saw that Grandma dropped papers on the floor, and you helped her pick them up. Good for you.”

## You Know Your Child Best

Your child will learn to cooperate better if they can practice working with others. Start with small projects and an adult who is easy to work with. It will be easy for them to make a snack for the family with you. It would be harder with their baby brother to make a block tower.

Resource

<http://www.pbskids.org/rogers> (Mister Rogers Neighborhood)

## Ideas and Suggestions

- Have your child help you with chores. Talk about how the work gets done faster when people work together. Your child can help:
  - clean up toys
  - sort newspapers and plastic bottles for recycling
- Do activities with your child that need two people:
  - using a broom and dustpan
  - playing throw and catch
- Have your child help make the schedule for a day when you will be together. List both your ideas for the day. Then cooperate to make the final schedule.
- Work together on something special-create a card for a friend.
- Work together on a community activity like cleaning up a playground. Talk about how working together makes good things happen.

## Books About Cooperation

*A Chair for My Mother* by Vera Williams

*Swimmy* by Leo Lionni

*It's mine!* By Leo Lionni

*Little Red Hen* by Paul Galdone

## April Activities

- Sing “Old McDonald Had a Farm”. Then, instead of animals, use letters...Old McDonald had a C, with a (letter sound) “c”, “c” here and a “c”, “c” there...then finish an item that starts with that sound
- Dig up some dirt, put it in a pot or cup, plant a seed, give it sun and water and watch it grow.
- Look out the window, or go outside at the same time everyday. Draw a picture of the “weather” (sky) for each day.
- While in the car, look for traffic signs ( shapes, colors, words), traffic signals ( red:: stop, yellow: wait a minute!, green: go), and road signs ( what street do we live on?)



# May

*“If a child lives with acceptance and friendship, he learns to find love in the world.”*

*- Dorothy Pageis*

## Making Friends

Having a friend will help your child be successful in school. When children have at least one friend, they are not alone. This helps them feel safe. Children share so many things with their friends. They share ideas, joys and worries. This helps them with the demands that come with starting school. Having a friend also gives children confidence in themselves. They feel they can try new things and take on challenges.

Children are able to make friends - and keep friends - when they have a strong bond of trust and safety with a special adult. Usually this is a parent. When preschool children know that you love them no matter what, they will be able to reach out and make their own friends.

## You Know Your Child Best

When your child knows for sure that you will respond to her, she learns that she can count on you. When you respond in the same way again and again, your child will feel safe.



## Resource

<http://www.pbskids.org/rogers> (Mister Rogers Neighborhood)

## May Activities

- Have your child call a friend and invite them over for a playdate.
- Make a list of fun things to do with friends.
- Read a friendship story and talk about good friendship behaviors.
- Have a friendship tea with your child. (Use kid's cups and plates and make little snacks and special juice.)



## Ideas and Suggestions

Spend special time every day with your child. Let your child decide what the two of you will do together. This will help him be able to make friends with others.

Playing with other children is a good start to making friends. Help your child understand what it's like to play with others. Talk about sharing toys. Talk about working together to decide what to play.

Your local library may have story times for preschoolers. That is a great place to meet other children and parents.

Talk with your child about the friends he may already have. Invite one or two children over for a play date. Keep the group small and stay close by. It will help your child feel safe to have you around.

## Books About Friendship:

*Jamaica Tag Along* by Juanita Havill

*Jamaica and Brianna* by Juanita Havill

*Frog and Toad Are Friends* by Arnold Lobel

# June

## Being Healthy, Staying Safe

You want to know that your child is healthy and safe when he is in school. You can help your child learn to be healthy and safe by what you say and do at home. Help your child learn to eat healthy foods at family meals where you all talk with each other. Serve healthy foods, and eat them yourself. All children need to be active. Take your child outside every day for an hour to walk, run or play.

Your child counts on you to help keep him safe. He also needs you to teach him safety habits and rules that can help in when he goes to school. When your child sees what is important to you, it will be important to him.



## You Know Your Child Best

What your child eats depends on the foods that are around him. It's up to you to have healthy foods in the house. You know what healthy foods your child likes. Keep those on hand. Give him new foods little by little. It may take many tries before he enjoys new foods.



## Resources

[www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org) (American Academy of Pediatrics)

*“They’re funny things, accidents. You never have them till you’re having them.”*

-Eeyore, *The House at Pooh Corner*, by A. A. Milne

### **Books About Health and Safety:**

*Washing My Hands* by Elizabeth Vogel

*Why Must I Wash My Hands?* by Jackie Graff

*No Dragons For Tea* by Jean Pendziwol

### **Ideas and Suggestions**

- Take your child to regular check-ups with the doctor. The doctor will make sure your child has all his immunizations. Ask the doctor about a lead test. This is especially important if you live in an older house or apartment building.
- Protect your child from tobacco smoke. Even second-hand smoke is bad for him.
- Help your child learn to brush his teeth. Take him to the dentist every six months.
- Always use a car seat.
- Teach your child how to cross the street safely. Make sure he wears a helmet when riding a bike.
- Teach your child not to play with matches, lighters, knives, cleaning supplies, medicines or guns.
- Put sun block and a hat on your child when going outside.
- Teach your child about safety with other people and what to do if a stranger comes up to him.



### **June Activities**

- Set a timer for washing hands and let them see why it needs to be longer by trying different amounts of time.
- Make a bicycle safety poster and hang it by your child’s bike.
- Count your teeth while you brush them
- Practice your phone number with your child on a toy phone.



# July

## Getting Organized

Kindergarten is approaching soon! Your child may be excited about going to school. She may also be a little worried. It will help her to do tasks to get ready for school.

When Kindergarten time comes, watch for notes from your child's school that tell you what she will need for kindergarten. Talk about the list with your child and make a plan to shop for the things together.

If your child is worried, let her know that you will help her. Talk with her about how much she has grown. Remind her how many things she is able to do. Explain that she will learn to do even more in kindergarten.

## Ideas and Suggestions

Visit the school with your child. Check out the classroom, the bathroom and the playground. She will like knowing what her school is like.

Start a bedtime routine. Have your child go to bed at the same time in the weeks before school starts. This will make it easier to wake up for school.

Start a morning routine. Help your child wake up at the same time each day. Lay out her clothes the night before. Plan for breakfast too. This will save time in the morning when she starts school.

Buy a backpack. Your child can pick out one she likes. Talk about all the things she will bring home from school in it.

Talk to your child about school and things they may be worried about. This might be using the bathroom, eating lunch or getting home. Be calm and tell them that you and their teacher will help them.

## You Know Your Child Best

Let your child help getting ready for kindergarten. You know what your child would enjoy doing -picking out clothes, choosing foods for snack, buying school supplies.



# August

## **Adjusting to School**

In this month you and your child might be busy getting ready for school. The most important thing you can do is to help your child feel that they will be fine when they go to school.

Kindergarten is brand new. You know what new things are like for your child. Some children worry about changes and need lots of time to get used to anything new. If your child is like this, talk about kindergarten a little bit but not too much. Even children who look forward to new things may want you to answer questions and help them feel that they will be fine in school.



## **You Know Your Child Best**

There may be ups and downs when your child starts kindergarten. You can tell when your child is excited and when things may be too much for them. You know when they may need time to relax. You can tell when they need you to listen to every single word about kindergarten. You are the person who can help them the most.

## **Resource**

<http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/collection.jsp?id=83>  
(A series of articles for parents on getting ready for kindergarten)

*“There is always a moment in childhood when the door opens and lets the future in.”*

– Deepak Chopra

### **Ideas and Suggestions**

Try not to have too many things planned for yourself the first few days of school. It will be easier to help your child if you have extra time.

Help your child know the routine of the day. Children like to know what will happen when.

Always say good-bye to your child when they get on the bus or go into the classroom. Even if your child is sad and cries, don't sneak away. Say good-bye and tell them that they will be all right. Make sure they know they will see you later.

If your child is worried about being in school, ask the teacher for help. Most kindergarten teachers will understand and know how to help.

If your child says they feel sick most days or doesn't want to go to school after several weeks, ask the teacher for help.

### **August Activities**

- Grab a cloth bag or a box with a hole in the top. Assemble objects/toys familiar to your child. While they close their eyes, put an object into the bag/box and challenge your child to identify the object by touch alone. Then switch roles.
- Collect pictures of your child from birth to present. Challenge them to put the pictures in the proper sequence.
- Take a favorite book and after reading it aloud, have your child use the illustrations to re-tell the story in their own words.
- Get out paper and pencils and let your child make the grocery list. Let them use the letter sounds they hear in the word or draw pictures of the items and you label them while they watch.



### **Books to Read**

There are many fine books written for children about the first day of school and/or heading off to kindergarten. Take a trip with your child to the library and help him find some of these books. The Children's Librarian can help

# Student Expectations

The State education Department has expectations for all students in elementary, middle and high schools. Because the early childhood years are so important for giving each child a sounds and strong foundation for learning, many skills are needed, particularly in the area of literacy development.

Skills include reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Children should be given opportunities to experience and explore both oral and written language in many different ways they are used. For example:

Children are provided books to look at in order to develop a sense of how books and other reading materials work:

- pictures are different from words,
- we read from front to back, top to bottom, and left to right,
- there are new words to know,
- books tell stories about real people and real experiences, and
- books tap into our creativity

Children and adults (parents, grandparents, teachers) play with language in order to get a feel for the sounds of the language:

- the differences in how big and small words are
- how words rhyme with each other, and
- how words share similar sounds

Children should have a chance to draw and write with lots of different tools and be encouraged to talk about their drawings and their writings in order to develop an understanding that words can be written down and used to communicate ideas and messages

Read to and speak with your child in order for them to develop the ability to listen and to understand when others speak or read.

Encourage your child to speak about their own ideas in order to sharpen their speaking skills and to communicate their own ideas and feelings.

When children have these and other kinds of opportunities, they will be able to build the literacy skills that will help them succeed in school.



# Recipes

Here are tried and true recipes for some of children's favorite play materials.

## **Favorite Cooked Play dough**

- 2 cups flour
- 2 cups water
- 1 cup salt
- 3 Tbsp. cream of tartar
- 2 Tbsp. oil
- 4-6 drops food coloring (optional)
- Mix all ingredients together in a large saucepan. Cook over medium heat stirring frequently with a wooden spoon. Mixture will clump together when done.

## **Goop**

- 2 cups cornstarch
- 2 cups water
- Mix cornstarch and water together in a dishpan until the mixture is solid in the container but liquid when picked up. You may need to add more cornstarch or water to achieve the desired consistency.

## **Cloud Dough**

- 6 cups flour
- 1 cup oil
- 1 cup water
- Mix all ingredients in a large mixing bowl. Knead.

## **Silly Putty**

- 1 cup liquid starch
- 2 cups Elmer's glue
- Pour liquid starch into a large mixing bowl. Gradually add the Elmer's glue. Knead until the desired consistency is achieved.



# Kindergarten...

## Here We Come!

This handbook is brought to you by the parent group of the S2AY Rural Health Network's Regional Early Childhood Coalition (RECC). The document was originally developed by Child Care Solutions, Onondaga and Cayuga Counties' Child Care Resource and Referral Agency. It was modified by the S2AY Rural Health Network to meet the specific needs of children and families in the S2AY Network service area.

