

ARE YOU READY FOR KINDERGARTEN?

Most likely, your child is ready for kindergarten the real question is, "are YOU ready for kindergarten?" Previous rookie kindergartners parents have shared that they had not realized how different today's kindergarten is from their own childhood memories. They also did not know that so many important activities and learning go on during that kindergarten year. In anticipation of some of your questions, here are a few tips that may be helpful as you get prepared for the beginning of your child's formal educational career...

Remember that you still are an important part of your child's education. Educational research verifies the importance of the parent involvement as a primary determinant of school success. **YOU ARE YOUR CHILD'S FIRST AND MOST IMPORTANT TEACHER!!!!"**

READ, READ, READ to your child. Commit to spending time every day to read with your child. Do 'picture walks' through new books to figure out what the story will be about before reading the book.

Do you remember when your child was learning to walk/run and the top of the body went faster than the feet, and your child went tumbling? Often, the child looks to the parents before deciding to cry or laugh. Going to kindergarten is that same kind of expedience for your child's and your reaction could be the determining factor. Your child may interpret your apprehensiveness into believing school is a scary place. If you are enthusiastic and excited about the new experience, your child will look forward to the opportunity.

Following verbal directions is an important part of school readiness. You can help prepare your child for school by placing your child in situations in which they must follow directions. Can your child follow simple one-step directions? Can your child follow simple two-step directions? For example: ask your child to put away a toy AND go get his/her sweater. Can both directions be followed without repetition of the request?

Ask your child to retell a story or event.

When you go places, point out things you see, words, letters, characteristics of things such as colors, shapes, sizes. Discuss how things are alike and how they are different.

Ask your child help you sort and put away things such as: laundry, groceries, books, toys, etc.

Help your child build self confidence by making sure they have learned self-care skills such as: hand washing, independent toiling, zipping, buttoning.

Social skills are sometimes difficult for kids. Help your child understand that sharing and taking turns will be important in school.

Teach your child that everyone is special and valuable. Human differences are not threats.