

5 WAYS TO PREP FOR PRESCHOOL



GET YOUR CHILD IN THE RIGHT FRAME OF MIND FOR THE TRANSITION FROM HOME TO PRESCHOOL.

Your child is starting preschool in a few months, and you are concerned if he can adapt to a different environment, understand classroom instructions and get along with his peers. Getting to know your child's temperament is useful in identifying the support he needs. Here's how to get your little one ready for his brand-new adventure.

1 GIVE A PREVIEW

Take a walk around the preschool neighbourhood or arrange for a prior visit, if possible, with your child. Point out the entrance, playground and activity corners in the centre. Take photos, print them out, and stick them in a scrapbook that you can go through with him at home to familiarise him with the preschool set-up. For example, you can refer to the photos and tell him, "This is the entrance where mummy picks you up" or "This is the art corner where you can draw".



3 TALK ABOUT PRESCHOOL

When packing your child's schoolbag together, talk about preschool and listen to his concerns: "What if I miss you?" or "What if I don't like my teacher?". Be patient, listen and encourage him to share his feelings. Remind him of the fun things he can do in preschool. Not all toddlers can fully express themselves with words, but you will get clues from their behaviour, expressions and gestures.



5 ACT OUT SCENARIOS

Use pretend play to act out scenarios which your child may struggle with. Is she worried about having to say goodbye? Let her act as the parent who needs to drop her child off at preschool and leave for work. Is he shy with strangers? Dramatise what to expect and say, such as introducing yourselves and using questions to initiate conversations.

2 GET INTO A DAILY ROUTINE

Two to three weeks before starting preschool, establish your child's morning and evening routines. Wake up, go to the bathroom and have breakfast on a schedule. In the evening, set out his clothes, prepare his water bottle and pack his schoolbag together. Encourage your child to practise self-help skills such as washing hands, feeding himself, and putting on his clothes and shoes.



4 PRACTISE SOCIAL SKILLS

If your child has limited interaction with other adults and children outside of your immediate family, consider leaving him in the care of a trusted relative for short periods of time or arrange playdates with cousins or friends' children.

