



## 5 Tips to Help Parents Get Ready for the First Day of Preschool

- 1. Be confident in your decision** - As a family, you have decided it's time to send your child to preschool. You picked out a preschool that was a good fit for your family. Now be confident in your decision. Remind yourself of all the reasons preschool will be a great experience for your child. Confidence is contagious. If you are at peace with your child's first day, your child will draw strength from the inner confidence you exude.  
  
Don't forget that your child's school is an excellent, rich resource for you. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to ask the director or another parent.
- 2. Meet other parents in the class or school** - Plenty of advice emphasizes how valuable it is for your child to meet and play with other children in his/her peer group. Do not underestimate the support you could receive by chatting with other parents from your child's peer group. You don't need to experience this next phase of parenting alone. Other parents are going through it also. Ask the school's front office about any scheduled play dates for your child's class before school starts or if they would mind matching you with another family in the class so you can meet other parents. Even better, maybe the school could put you in touch with another parent who has been through this experience before with older siblings.
- 3. Arrange a "play date" for you after drop off** - Dropping off your child on the first day can be hard for some parents. Arrange to meet with a friend right after drop off. Meet for coffee at a close coffee shop or go for a power walk. The time will go by much faster if you distract your mind with some good conversation and fun!
- 4. Prepare the night before** - Anything you can do the night before to help make the next morning easier, do it. Lay out the clothes your child will wear. Find the missing shoe. If your child is staying for lunch, pack as much of the lunch as you can the night before. Advance preparations can include filling a water bottle and storing it in the fridge overnight; gathering non-perishables like crackers; and/or pre-slicing food. Doing those little things in advance can help you minimize distractions and added stress. It will allow you to just be "present" and be there for your child before school starts.
- 5. Give yourself plenty of time** - Build in extra time for the unexpected. When your child accidentally spills his morning milk all over the special first day clothing outfit, you can still enjoy this milestone without worrying about being late. Allow for time to take that picture, kiss those awesome cheeks and give that encouraging hug.

*Now, deep inhale and gentle, slow exhale. You got this!*