

First Steps to New School Year

Acknowledging Your Child's Fears

Starting school whether for the first time or a new school year is a big step.

While many children are excited and can't wait for school to begin, it is perfectly normal to feel anxious before and during the first weeks of school.

Here are a few ideas for easing fears and making a smooth transition:

- Acknowledge your child's fears and apprehensions. Tell your child it is ok to feel nervous but assure him/her that the feeling will go away soon.
- Talk to your child about what to expect in school. Always emphasize on the positive.
- Praise your child for accomplishing tasks independently. This will show your child that you believe in their ability to do things "all by myself" and boost confidence.
- Discuss how drop off and pick up will look to your child (especially if someone other than you is doing so-grandparent, babysitter). Remind them that you will not be in class with them but assure them that someone will be there when school is over at the end of the day.
- Don't overwhelm you child with too many school activities or talk about school unless they bring it up. Your anxiety builds theirs.
- Make sure your child is well rested and has a healthy breakfast each morning.
- Give ample time to get ready in the morning, rushing creates anxiety.
- Let them know that they can talk to their teachers and ask if they need something (especially if they have to go potty).

Some books that may help:

- "Will I Have a Friend?" By Miriam Cohen
- "Wemberly Worried" By Kevin Henkes
- "The Runaway Bunny" By Margaret Wise Brown

