



Starting school is **not** about...  
*knowing the alphabet*

Starting school is **not** about...  
*knowing how to read and write*

Starting school is **not** about...  
*being able to sit at a table for long periods of time*

Children are all at different stages of development when they begin school because each child is unique and develop at their own pace. When we look at preparing our child from a developmental perspective, it helps us understand what is required to support their development, growth, and maturity. This helps us prepare for the first school transition.

## Understanding the Preschool Age Child

To help understand our own child's development

### Playful

A natural instinct and love for play

### Egocentric

Prone to resistance and defiance

### Fear Separation

Seek contact and closeness

### Lack Self Control and Impulsive

Can only hold on to one thought or feeling at a time

## Play, Play & More Play

Research shows that the brain is enhanced most of all by the hours spent in play. Play is defined as: unstructured, risk-free, expressive, and exploratory

### Unstructured



### Risk-Free



### Expressing oneself

### Understanding the world

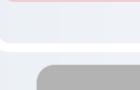
### Understanding Emotions

### PLAY

### Communicating

### Problem Solving

### Expressive



### Exploratory

## Emotions - Permission to Feel

Research shows emotions need to be released and felt for healthy emotional development to unfold

### Drawing and Painting

Allows expression without requiring verbal communication



### Building and Creating

To imagine, create, explore, overcome barriers, problem solve and find solutions



### Role Play/Dress Up

Releases emotional energy while making sense of their world



### Fine Motor/Quiet Activities

Provides a calmness to help work through emotions



## Children Need Strong Attachments

Deep connections with our children, along with play and emotion, support children's readiness for school and learning

### Attachments can be strengthened through...

- play with your child
- reading stories
- creating special routines

### Children need strong attachments for...

- healthy development to occur
- to feel their needs are being met
- to be free to play, discover, imagine
- to foster independence

# Transition to School



Your child's transition to school signifies the beginning of their educational journey. This is an important change, as it lays the foundation for future transitions and impacts their motivation and love for learning.

## Building an Understanding

Provides comfort and reduces stressors

### Conversation

Discussions about what to expect at school and daily check-in's to reduce anxiety

### Stories

Stories can help children name and express their own emotions about starting school

### Expectations

Encourage a range of independent skills e.g. getting dressed, making choices, bathroom hygiene, follow directions ('Simon Says' - fun way to practice)

### Environment

Visit the school, follow the school on their social media page, and attend events, (e.g. orientation, open house)

## Building Attachments

Attachments fundamentally shape their development, experiences and life-long love for learning

### Sameness

A child feels connected to a teacher when they share things in common. Look to find similarities and sameness, and share them with your child

### Take the Lead

Take the Lead in introducing your child to the teacher/adult - this demonstrates that it is someone they can trust

### Positive Dialogue

Be mindful about how we talk about the teacher/school in the child's presence (words, body language). This safeguards these relationships. This is what makes the child feel safe, connected and secure

### Communication

Maintaining communication with the teacher/school will help support your child's learning and success



## Structure and Routine

Predictable and familiar

### Morning

Collect your child in the morning with a smile and a chat. Collecting gathers their attention and makes transition easier

### Bedtime

Bedtime routine provides a time of closeness, connection and opportunity for sharing thoughts and feelings

### Sleep

Sufficient amount of sleep supports cognitive and emotional functioning

### Bridging

When you drop your child off to school, focus on when you will see them next. Provide something tangible that reminds your child of you

If you are feeling anxious or worried about your child's transition to school, just remember, you are the answer and their solution!  
The love, gentleness, warmth, and deep connection your child feels with you will allow you to lead.  
They will then feel safe, secure and connected  
- they will be ready to learn and grow.