

# Transition from Home and to School

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**Starting Kindergarten** is an exciting time but change can be scary too. Here are a few ideas to consider.

- ❖ Visiting the kindergarten before starting full time gives your child a mental image to use when discussing their approaching start date. Talk about 'my kindy' and what activities they may look forward to.
- ❖ You can choose to stay with your child at the start of their kindergarten year to support them. There is a lot to learn at first. Staff are experienced with helping new families and children.
- ❖ We are sensitive to the signals from children and can offer support. Sometimes we suggest parents make the separation quickly to minimize distress and take over the supporting adult role in place of parents. We suggest telephoning the centre after 15/30 minutes to check on your child, very often they are taking comfort from a teacher and settling to an activity.
- ❖ We know these anxious feelings are short lived but intensely felt, children usually respond to a warm caring adult.
- ❖ Start the day by saying "Let's do an activity together then I will go", always say goodbye and reassure them that you will return after doing the shopping (or going to work or something ordinary)
- ❖ Always bring your child into the playroom and sign the attendance sheet. **NEVER** leave your child in the yard.
- ❖ Arrive and Pick up on time. Be reliable for your child, it gives reassurance.
- ❖ Make a routine for getting ready to help your child anticipate what has to be done, e.g. packing a snack into their bag.
- ❖ Attend regularly, it shows your child that kindergarten is important and valuable to you too.
- ❖ Talk to your child about their teachers and friends. Learn our names to use with your child, just like family members. Some cultures prefer their children to call us 'Teacher' or 'Miss', that's ok. Just remember that Teachers are human beings too!

**Starting School** is an exciting time but change can be scary too. This is what happens usually...

- ❖ Children are invited to attend school visits prior to starting. These visits are often just two or three mornings in the last few weeks of term. They may meet their teacher or just be in a classroom environment.
- ❖ Staff from kindergarten can accompany children on these visits to offer reassurance if necessary. This can be negotiated between parent, teacher and school.
- ❖ Visit the school after hours. Walk around and see if you can identify any areas of interest, e.g. the canteen, the sports shed and the toilets. Keep it simple.
- ❖ Don't talk too much about unknowns. You don't have to teach your child the entire evacuation procedure; it will only increase their anxiety.
- ❖ Borrow the hand-made starting school book. It has photos of our local school. Use it as a starting point for talking about what to expect when starting school.
- ❖ Ask for help from staff if you are very anxious. They want to help.