



How Can You Prepare Your Child for Transitional Kindergarten/TK?

Transitional Kindergarten is an exciting time for children as they begin their educational journey. This list provides tips to help prepare them for the year ahead. Although all skills may not be mastered, they should all be practiced in the months prior to starting TK.

Work on your student's independence:

- Bathroom skills – get on and off the toilet without assistance, wipe effectively and with an appropriate amount of toilet paper, flush without fear, pull up and button/snap pants, keep bathroom/stall door shut while in use, keep clothes on until door is closed
- Wash hands, wipe face, and blow nose, (cough, sneeze into elbow)
- Open and close snack, chip bags, and lunch containers; help clean up after self (teach the pinch-pinch-pull technique - think: opening a bag of chips)
- Peel fruit – bananas and oranges
- Take jackets and sweaters on and off
- Zip, button, and snap clothing
- Put on socks and shoes and fasten shoes
- Change clothes
- Pack and unpack backpack
- Pick up and put away toys and personal items
- Support independent problem solving by giving time to try and think before offering assistance
- Play independently

Help your student develop their communication, social, and emotional skills:

- Separate from a caregiver without getting overly upset (please practice this before school begins if your child hasn't been without you) - **“Quick goodbyes leave dry eyes”**
- Discuss the various adults they will be interacting with on campus (classroom teachers, the principal, staff, etc.) and explain that they are a safe space where children can share their needs and feelings
- Explain that it's okay to go to the nurse if they do not feel well and they will not be getting shots
- Use the words “Please stop” and “I don't like that” when someone does something to bother them
- Use the words “May I have a turn when you are done?” when they want something that someone else is using (students are not forced to share)
- Name and express basic feelings
- Listen to a short story without interrupting
- Respond appropriately to the words “no, thank you” when redirected by an adult
- Practice winning and losing gracefully
- Follow one-and two-step directions
- Know and say first and last name
- Find effective calming techniques that can be done while at school (i.e. deep breaths)

Read with your child every day and talk about what you are reading. Use big vocabulary words. Share positive stories and memories from when you were in school. Acknowledge all their feelings about starting TK while focusing on the positive to help them with a successful beginning in school.