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Introduction
Life is full of change. Change is stressful.

What greater stress does a child experience than separating from the adults who love and care for him?
How stressful can it be to enter a large unfamiliar room full of unfamiliar children and adults for the first time?
How much learning can really take place when a child is stressed and attempting to cope with this type of change?

By working together, teachers, parents, and providers can ease this potentially stressful transition for our youngest students. By collaborating and providing a few simple activities, the adults in our community can make this life changing experience a positive launching of our children into the exciting world of learning.

This guide was developed to provide tips and ideas to parents, teachers, and providers on smoothing the kindergarten transition process for our children, thus creating a positive experience for our children and setting them up for high achievement.

The transition to school sets the tone and direction of a child’s school career.

(Pianta and Kraft, 1999)
Parents

Preparing Your Child for Kindergarten

You are your child’s first, best teacher. You can help your child transition into kindergarten through these easy activities:

- Enroll your child in preschool for at least 3 hours daily.
- Play with your child outdoors and indoors.
- Explore new activities to help adjust to change and the unknown.
- Read to your child daily for 20 minutes.
- Talk to your child, and listen carefully.
- Use consistent discipline. Attend parenting classes for more ideas.
- Limit electronic game playing and television. Visit the library instead.
- Have a regular family reading night where everyone reads their favorite books.
- Create a child friendly work/writing space in your home.
- Teach your child independence through: child friendly clothing, correct length shoelaces, toileting independence, putting away jackets and toys.
Parents
More Ideas to Prepare

- Register your child for kindergarten early. Applications are available in January.
- Visit your child’s future classroom in the spring or attend Open House Night.
- Establish consistent routines for: meal times, bedtime, daily schedules.
- Show your child you are proud that he/she is going to school.
- Express a positive attitude about school and learning.
- Keep immunizations up to date.
- Dental check ups and physicals are needed.

My Child’s First Day of Kindergarten…..
Now What?

Your child’s success from kindergarten through grade twelve will depend on your continued involvement. These suggestions are great for all grade levels as your child progresses through school.

- Visit the classrooms and meet with your child’s teacher.
- Get involved in the school parent groups. Volunteer to help.
- Continue reading to your child everyday and have family reading nights.
- Provide a quiet work area at home for homework.
Opportunities you can provide will enhance the child’s learning and better prepare children for the transition into kindergarten:

- **Social Skills**—practice routines, lining up, sitting in a small group circle, getting along with peers, taking turns, sharing, cleaning up after activities, listening to stories, following adults directions, practice self-help skills,

- **Emotional Skills**—separating easily from parent, pride in accomplishments, compassion for others, caring for class pets or plants, involvement in child initiated activities and choices, ability to follow a posted schedule and transition with ease,

- **Cognitive Skills**—recognition of colors, shapes, letters, and numbers, write and recognize child’s own name, holding a pencil or crayon in a firm yet relaxed grip, lots of exposure to books and other reading materials,

- **Physical Skills**—opportunities for gross motor movement such as jumping, running, throwing, catching; fine motor practice such as stringing beads, small blocks, painting, and writing.

(Pianta and Walsh, 1996)
Preschool Teachers and Private Providers

More ways to create a smooth transition:

- Organize a transition event with the kindergarten teachers at your local elementary school.
- Visit the school library and check out books, teaching responsibility of school materials.
- Visit the kindergarten playground to begin practicing safe use of the equipment.
- Visit the school cafeteria and practice carrying lunch trays, eating as a class, and cleaning up.
- Encourage parents to volunteer one day a month to help in the classroom and learn new ways to interact with the children.
- Meet/Articulate with the kindergarten teachers to introduce them to the children you know and love.
- Speak clearly and use correct grammar as a role model.
- Forward the child’s assessments to the future kindergarten teacher.
- Create and maintain consistent routines and use visual schedules.

The relationship that children have with adults and other children in families, child care, and school programs provide the foundation for their success in school.

(Pianta and Walsh, 1996)
Kindergarten Teachers and Teams
Smoothing the Path into Kindergarten

Kindergarten teachers know how hectic the first few days of school can be as children begin the new school year. For those children who have had little or no preschool or childcare experience, it can be especially difficult.

The following is a list of basic activities a kindergarten team can do in order to smooth the transition for all children:

- Insert a “Welcome to our Classroom” letter in enrollment packets including: your introduction, daily schedule, supplies needed, suggestions for appropriate clothing and shoes, and kindergarten standards.

- Provide a spring orientation for newly registered children and their parents. Activities during the orientation could include: visit to the library, cafeteria, and playground, list of activities for parents and children to do over the summer, list of supplies needed, copy of your daily schedule for parents and children to practice during the summer, ice breakers for you, the children and their parents.

- If a spring orientation isn’t possible, provide a fall orientation with the same activities as listed above.

More Ideas to Prepare My Child’s First Day of Kindergarten…..

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Smoothing the Path into Kindergarten

- Create a picture book of your own classroom and donate to your nearby preschools and private child care providers.
- Encourage volunteerism in the classroom one day a month to continue your parent partnership and help the child see their parent values the education process.
- Invite your local preschool classes and private providers children to tour your classroom and school.
- Meet with preschool teachers and local private providers to learn about the children who have been in their care.
## Children’s Books About Going to School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carlos Goes to School</td>
<td>Anderson</td>
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<td>I’d Rather Stay Home</td>
<td>Barkin</td>
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<td>Berenstain Bears Go to School</td>
<td>Berenstain</td>
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<td>The Kindergarten Book</td>
<td>Calmenson</td>
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<td>Look Out Kindergarten Here I Come</td>
<td>Carlson</td>
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<td>We Like Kindergarten</td>
<td>Cassidy</td>
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<td>Will I have a Friend?</td>
<td>Cohen</td>
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<td>Kindergarten Rocks</td>
<td>Davis</td>
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<td>Carl Goes to Daycare</td>
<td>Day</td>
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<td>Llama, llama Misses Mama</td>
<td>Deudney</td>
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<td>Grover Goes to School</td>
<td>Elliott</td>
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<td>I Started School Today</td>
<td>Frandsen</td>
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<td>My First Days of School</td>
<td>Hamilton-Meritt</td>
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<td>The School Mouse</td>
<td>Harris</td>
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<td>The Monkey that Went to School</td>
<td>Meshovar</td>
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<td>Who’s Going to Take Care of Me?</td>
<td>Magorian</td>
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<td>Twenty-One Children</td>
<td>Ormsby</td>
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<td>First Day of School</td>
<td>Oxenbury</td>
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<td>The Kissing Hand</td>
<td>Pena</td>
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<td>Molly at the Library</td>
<td>Radlauer</td>
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<td>The Night Before Kindergarten</td>
<td>Wing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Morris Goes to School</td>
<td>Wiseman</td>
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Visit your local library or school library for other great choices.
Resources

Books
Is Everybody Ready for Kindergarten-Preparing Children and Families by Angele Sancho Passe


Websites
http://www.education.com/topic/preparing-for-kindergarten/

Agencies
Child Action— www.childaction.org (916) 369-0191
Preschool Bridging —SCOE www.scoe.net
   Model (916) 228-2500
First 5 Sacramento—www.sackids.saccounty.net (916)876-5877
Twin Rivers ECE/CD Dept. — (916) 566-1600 *50403

California Education Code 897- School districts with early primary programs shall provide educational continuity from preschool through kindergarten and grades 1 to 3, inclusive, by accomplishing the following:(a) Establish connections with public preschool programs, including state preschool, state child development, and federal HeadStart programs, to establish a more effective transition of children from preschool to kindergarten.
Early Childhood Education

Janet Balcom, Assistant Superintendent
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Jana Fields, Coordinator,
Carrie Nelson, Program Specialist

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Beanstalk Preschool Teachers
Erika Smith and Donyeal Robinson

Head Start Freedom Park Staff
Karin Ramirez, Clarissa Jenkins, and Mari Munkala

TRUSD Preschool Teacher
Cynthia Torrez, Kelli Tapia, and Pamela Van Parys

TRUSD Kindergarten Teacher
Kathryn Monk, Nancy Nozaki, Elizabeth Graves and Diane Footman

ENSURING SUCCESS FROM THE START
Kindergarten Transition Guide