

Tips for Kindergarten

Resource: <https://teacch.com/parents-toolbox-tips-for-transition-to-kindergarten/>

Transition to Kindergarten – Tips for Parents

The transition to Kindergarten can be stressful for both parents and children with ASD. Even if the child is attending preschool in the same school, chances are they will enter the school in a different place, eat lunch in a different place and play on a different playground. Making a plan will ease everyone's anxiety about this milestone and add help to the child's transition into school.

Here are some helpful tips:

~visit the school several times before your child attends the school. This can be challenging during the summer, but most playgrounds are accessible when the school is closed.

~Take pictures of your child on the playground and at other locations around the school. The pictures can be used to make a book about your child at their new school and you can read/show them the book over a period of time.

~Many schools will have extended school year services, so if you can go in the school when it is relatively quiet, it can be helpful to show your child the cafeteria, the library, or the gym, when they are not full of loud children.

~Introduce your child to one new person each time they visit the school. Important people to get to know are the person at the front desk, cafeteria and janitorial staff at school. The transition will be easier once the child begins to identify new but familiar faces at school

~Try to find out in advance what your child's school hours will be. If they will be very different from the preschool schedule, start changing bedtime, wake up time, and other things that may change well in advance of the start of school(at least two weeks). If your child still naps, they will not have the opportunity to nap in Kindergarten, although there may be a rest time in the afternoon after lunch.

~Read books about going to Kindergarten:

Miss Kindergarten Gets Ready for Kindergarten by Joseph Slate Ashley Wolff

The Kissing Hand by Audrey Penn

Reading these books in anticipation of attending the new school may also be helpful.

~Purchasing a new back pack and lunch box and having a special place to keep them in the house should be done in advance. The child can practice putting things in the back pack and carrying it on summer outings to get used to the idea of a backpack.(if not already)

~If you visit the school, the backpack can be taken with you and you can eat a picnic lunch. Most importantly, the child will need to learn that every time they go to school, the backpack also goes along.

~It can be a nice idea to volunteer in the classroom so that the teacher will see you as a "helpful parent", however, do give your child plenty of time to make the transition fully before you show up in his or her classroom. Keep in mind that it may be a very smooth transition, or it may take several weeks before he or she is comfortable with all of the new activities.

~Kindergarteners do have more transitions from the classroom during their school day than do preschoolers and it may take a while for your child to settle in. Don't be overly concerned if this takes a while. Kindergarten teachers report that the first nine weeks of school is spent helping **all** children get used to the routine of school.