

# Some things you can do to ease anxiety and help calm fears about starting kindy.

For some children, Kindergarten can be very different from anything your child has ever experienced before. The thought of the unknown can make kids feel anxious and unsure about starting kindy. While there will always be some level of nervousness when faced with a change, there are things you can do to ease anxiety and help calm fears about starting kindy.

## 1. Talk to your child.

Discuss what fears he or she may have about kindy. This sounds simple, but can be overlooked. It's easy to assume what things about starting kindy are making a child nervous, but what seems scary to adults isn't always the same thing that is scary to a child. Find out what *your* child is worried about.

## 2. Share your experiences.

Make sure that your child knows that everyone feels nervous sometimes and it's okay to feel that way. Talk about how you were nervous on your first day of work or kindy and what you did about it. Use your story to share strategies that would work at kindy.

## 5. Read your "Kindy Book" and other books about kindy.

Books are fantastic for helping kids deal with change. Read the "Kindy Book" given to your child at their initial interview. This has pictures of your child's teachers and different kindy areas. Even kids who aren't worried will benefit from reading about going to kindy.

## 8. Develop a goodbye routine.

Kids do better when they know what to expect and transition times can be tough. Help ease the stress of goodbyes by rehearsing and planning what you both will do. Tell your child what you are going to do when you take him or her to kindy. For example, we will put your bag away. You can do your "morning jobs" (fruit in the bowl, lunch box & water bottle in fridge and bag away), then perhaps do one thing together. Then it is time for a hug and say see you later alligator. That way during the craziness of the first week of kindy you both will know exactly how that transition will go.

## 10. Stay calm.

It's sometimes difficult for parents to deal with the thought of sending their child off to kindergarten. Make sure your anxieties and feelings aren't rubbing off on your child. Talk to friends about how you feel and do your best to maintain a calm and confident manner around your child so he doesn't get the idea that kindy is something for him to be worried about.

Starting kindy can take awhile for some kids to get used to. Don't worry if it takes your child more time to adjust than his or her friends. All kids handle changes differently. Keep the teacher informed of any concerns. Please remember it makes the separation much easier if it is not prolonged. If your child is upset, you probably should leave quickly. Children can experience the separation process and then move on to the next part of their day.

