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***READY for SCHOOL Parent News:***  
**Preparing Children for the Transition to School**

In addition to ensuring that children have all the skills they need for success in school, teachers can also help children prepare socially and emotionally to attend formal schooling. Whether they are entering kindergarten or first grade, helping children know what to expect goes a long way. Children’s fictional books about going to school may serve as discussion-starters. A few suggestions follow below. Feel free to add your own favorites to the list.

*Curious George Goes to School* by M. Rey & H.A. Rey

*First Day Jitters* by J. Danneberg

*I am absolutely too small for school* by L. Child

*I love school!* by P. Sturges & S. Halpern

*Leo the Late Bloomer* by R. Kraus

*Miss Bindergarten Gets Ready for Kindergarten* by J. Slate

*Mr. George Baker* by A. Hest & J.J. Muth

*The Kissing Hand* by A. Penn

*Will I Have a Friend?* by M. Cohen

Just as adults learn from role playing sample scenarios, children do too. Play a language game where you begin a story and let your child add on to it. For example, “Lewis was excited and a little scared about riding the yellow school bus for the first time. He knew that he had to be at his bus stop by a certain time and that if he wasn’t there the bus wouldn’t wait. His Dad thought it might be good to practice getting to the bus stop in the morning. Here is what they did. . .” (Have children fill in the next part of the story.) This activity not only helps children anticipate getting ready for school, but also improves listening and oral language skills.

Being open to children’s questions is always important. You can start the discussion with an open-ended question such as “What do you want to know about going to school next year?” Be prepared to prompt children, or they may have lots of spontaneous questions on their own. You might get questions like:

“What do I do if I have to go to the bathroom?”

“What if I get lost at my new school and can’t find my room?”

“Do you get to play outside?”

Some questions will take a little research prior to or in follow-up, but this research will leave you better prepared to ensure that your child is *Ready for School*.

Reference: Wesley, P.W. (2001). *Smooth Moves to Kindergarten*. Chapel Hill, NC: Chapel Hill Training Outreach Project, Inc.