Starting kindergarten is a major milestone in the life of a child. Here are some ideas you can try to ensure the Transition period is as positive as possible for both you and your child.

**Families can try:**

- Taking photos on your phone or tablet at orientation day (e.g. building entrance, kindergarten room door, teacher, toilet, playground, bag area) and talking about these regularly over the summer holidays
- Reading books about going to kindergarten e.g.: ‘The Kissing Hand’ by Audrey Penn and ‘Tom Goes to Kindergarten’ by Margaret Wild and David Legge
- Sharing the child’s interests with their new educators
- Driving/walking past the kindergarten occasionally to familiarise the child with their new environment
- Sharing any significant events that occurred recently such as: death, separation, birth, illness, moving house etc. with the educator
- Choosing clothes that are easy to get on/off independently – including pants/skirts for toileting, limit number of hooded jumpers to allow safer play

**Is your child Kindergarten ready?**

**Some things to consider:**

- Age and development of your child, every child is different with reaching their milestones.
- Is your child interested in other children and learning new things?
- Does your child like playing and exploring with new experiences and activities?
- Has your child practised their independence skills in the family home eg: toileting, eating?
- Has your child been left with other people other than parents/carers?
- Can your child stay focussed on an experience shared with a parent/carer for a short period of time eg: books, lego
- Does your child like to play outside? eg, climbing, playing in the sand pit?
- Can your child verbalise their needs and wants?
- Has your child had experience in a social group setting? eg: play group/child care?
Practising building children’s independence at home:

Encourage children to:

- Practice opening and closing lunch / snack containers (use containers children can open independently)
- Carry, pack and unpack their own belongings into their bags
- Put on their own sunscreen and hat
- Recognise when they are hot and cold and how to dress appropriately for the weather (e.g.: remove or put on jumper)
- Practice eating independently, snacks at kindergarten usually consist of a healthy option eg: fruit, sandwich, yoghurt, drink of water. Encourage children to sit down whilst eating.

Supporting children who may be anxious about starting Kindergarten

- Talk with children about what sorts of activities may occur at kindergarten (e.g.: routines, art and craft), use photos to show examples.
- Always say “good bye” to children when you are leaving even if they are upset.
- Tell them you will be back later to pick them up, children will build trusting positive relationships with the educators.
- Remind families to talk casually about starting kinder with their child - overdoing it may create more anxiety
- Taking photos of the new kindergarten, with tablets/phones that can be viewed and discussed with the child prior to starting.

Going to kindergarten is a big step for parents too...

- If you are feeling anxious about your child going to kindergarten, try to be positive and reduce this worry as children can pick up on parents’ anxiety.
- If your child has additional or medical needs, make an appointment with the educator to share information. If possible the meeting should occur Nov/Dec prior to starting kindergarten. This could be done in the educators’ non-contact time.
- If your family speak English as a second language, discuss with the educator some tips regarding your child’s communication and goals for learning English.
- Consider your child’s age and readiness for kindergarten. Children receive one year of state funded kindergarten prior to accessing school. What is the best transition for your child?

Kindergarten! ... here I come!