

STARTING KINDERGARTEN – A TIP SHEET FOR 3 & 4 YEAR OLD PARENTS/CARERS

Starting kindergarten is a major milestone

Tips for a positive transition:

TOGETHER

Families, Kindergarten Teachers and Educators can support children starting Kindergarten

Families can:

- Take photos on a phone or tablet on Orientation Day (e.g. The front of the Kindergarten building, the entry to the Kindergarten room, the teacher/Educators, toilet, playground, bag area, etc)
- Look at the photos and talk about them before Kindergarten starts
- Read books about going to kindergarten E.g. 'The Kissing Hand' by Audrey Penn and 'Tom Goes to Kindergarten' by Margaret Wild and David Legge
- Share the child's interests with their teacher
- Drive/walk past Kindergarten
- Share important information with Educators. E.g. death, separation, birth, illness, moving house etc.
- Choose clothes that are easy to get on and off – including pants/skirts for independent toileting



Is your child Kindergarten ready?

Think about:

- Your child's age, development and if they are reaching their milestones (Contact a Maternal and Child Health Service if unsure)
- Is your child interested in other children?
- Does your child like playing and exploring new things?
- Has your child practised their independence skills in the family home e.g. Dressing, toileting, eating.
- Has your child been cared for by adults other than parents/carers?
- Can your child focus on an experience with a parent/carer for a short period of time? e.g.: books, LEGO
- Does your child like to play outside? E.g. climbing, playing in the sand pit
- Can your child express their needs and wants?
- Has your child had experience in a social group setting? E.g.: play group/child care



Independence



Support children to:

- Practice opening and closing lunch / snack containers (can your child open containers on their own?)
 - Carry, pack and unpack their own things into their bags
 - Put on their own sunscreen and hat
- Notice when they feel hot and cold and add or remove layers of clothes
- Eat independently and sitting down - snacks at Kindergarten are often a healthy option e.g.: fruit, vegetables, sandwich and drink of water.

If your child is nervous or anxious:

- Talk with children about what they might do at Kindergarten (e.g. You will sit on the mat, build with blocks, paint, play outside with friends and eat your snack)
- Listen to your child's feelings and let them know you feel nervous sometimes too
- Always say "good bye" when you leave, even if your child feels upset
- Let your child know you will be back to pick them up - children will build trusting relationships with their educators
- Talk casually about starting Kindergarten – too much talk may create worry

Support for parents:

- If you are feeling nervous or anxious about your child going to Kindergarten, try to talk to a listening adult to share your feelings. Keep conversations with your child focused on their feelings.
- If your child has additional or medical needs, make an appointment with the Teacher to share information. If possible the meeting should occur Nov/Dec prior to starting Kindergarten.
- If your family speak English as an additional language, let the Teacher know if your child cannot communicate in English and if you need extra support
- Get advice when the best time is for your child to access their 2 years of funded Kindergarten

