

## Helpful Tips for Parents:

### Ways to Prepare your New Kindergartener for School

Beginning kindergarten is a very exciting experience for most families, but can also be somewhat anxiety provoking for some children and parents. Many parents have plenty of questions about how to best prepare their children for the daily routines, longer hours and expectations in Kindergarten. Many of these expectations extend beyond helping young children prepare for the academic work. In fact, some of the most important skills needed for a smooth transition to kindergarten have to do with independence, self-help and social skills.

The Kindergarten Teachers, Elementary School Counselors and School Psychologists of the Concord Public Schools have collaborated to provide a list of family-friendly tips for preparing young children for their new role as kindergarten students.

#### 1. Emphasize Self-Help Skills:

- Give them small, appropriate chores to prepare them for classroom jobs, i.e. sorting socks, setting table, cleaning up their toys after play.
- Have them sit at the dinner table, without getting up, for increasing time increments.
- Practice unpacking snacks, putting on coats, hats, boots independently.

#### 2. Encourage Age Appropriate Social Skills:

- Practice taking turns talking in a group, using a "talking stick" or some other type of turn-taking tool, when they are at the dinner table.
- Practice games that require sharing, working together and turn-taking.
- Encourage the use of "please" and "thank you", as well as teaching the importance of "whole body listening". (Eyes, Ears, Hands/Body).
- Being *very consistent* with your limit-setting and follow-through at home is the most important way you can prepare your child for the expectations and structure of a Kindergarten classroom.

#### 3. Emphasize Self-Regulation and Attention Skills:

- Practice giving your child 2-3 step directions, and verbal praise after they follow the steps.
- Gain your child's eye contact, using his/her name when delivering instructions.
- Get into a habit of physical exercise to help support their ability to regulate their energy level in school. For example, you might have them practice hopping, marching, jogging, and even incorporate this into their morning routine.
- Keep them sitting down for a whole story, while reading to them, asking them thoughtful questions about the story, along the way.
- For more information about self-regulation skills, please visit:  
<http://www.toolsofthemind.org/extendedcampus/toolsofthemind/>

We look forward to getting to know all of our new K students in September!!