

Successful Transition to Kindergarten for Learners Who May Be at Risk for Learning Disabilities

Heading off to kindergarten is a big event for all kids and parents. For young children who have struggled socially or academically during preschool, it is a transition that needs careful planning and attention. Below are four suggestions for parents of children who may need extra help making a successful move to kindergarten.

1. **Don't wait to start planning the transition.** The whole last year of preschool is an important time to keep in touch with your child's preschool teacher. Ask whether your child has been through a screening of early literacy skills, including speech and language skills. If so, find out the results and whether your child needs additional help while still in preschool. Getting good help early can make a huge difference for your child.
2. **Get to know your new school.** Make time to visit your child's new elementary school before school starts. Meet with the principal and some of the kindergarten teachers. Find out how they help individual children make a smooth transition to kindergarten. Some schools offer kindergarten camps or morning drop-in visits that can give your child a sense of what a day in the new school will be like.
3. **Help your kindergarten teacher get to know your child.** What are your child's strengths? What does your child like to do? How does your child learn best? What screenings, supports, and special services did your child receive during the preschool years? Include any information about speech and language services, social worker, and occupational and physical therapy. Last, share any concerns you have about your child's development.
4. **Go ahead, be pushy.** Some parents hesitate to call their preschool teacher or the elementary school to set up appointments. They worry that they're being too assertive or getting their child off on the wrong foot. Nothing could be further from the truth! As a parent, you know your child better than anyone, and you are your child's best advocate. When it comes to a struggling young learner, there isn't a minute to waste.

For more information about transition to kindergarten for kids with disabilities, see:
www.ReadingRockets.org/article/30123

