

Transitions: Toddler to Preschool



Starting school can be both an exciting and scary time for parents and children alike. There are plenty of things you can do to ensure a smooth transition for your toddler going into preschool. See the tips below for helpful ideas when preparing for takeoff.

Toddlers starting Preschool

- *Establish a routine* – having a set “bedtime” and early “wakeup time” will help you and your child prepare and adjust to the new schedule.
- *Visit your local library* – provide an opportunity for your child to hear another adult reading a book aloud in a group setting; this will set the stage for circle time in their preschool classroom.
- *Learn about toileting procedures* – familiarize yourself with the center’s toileting procedures and review this with your child to be sure that they are comfortable; this will help them know what to expect.
- *Arrange play dates* – request a list of children that will be in your child’s class and arrange a play date; this will give both you and your child a social connection.
- *Tell stories* – share stories with your child about when you went to school and how you felt about the process; this will normalize the feelings and give your child an opportunity to express how they are feeling.
- *Give your child a personal belonging* – share a personal item such as a favorite scarf, or a special photograph that your child can bring with them; this will provide comfort and remind your child that you are coming back at the end of the day.

Read Relevant Books Together

There are many books about going to school and saying goodbye that you can read together with your child; this will help prepare them for the transition and the separation. Some examples include:

- *First Day of School* by Anne Rockwell
- *It’s Time for Preschool* by Esme Raj Codell
- *A Pocketful of Kisses* by Audrey Penn
- *When I Miss You* by Comelia Maude Spelman

For more information, please contact
Snohomish Health District’s Child Care Health Outreach Program
at 425.252.5415 or childcarehealth@snohd.org.