

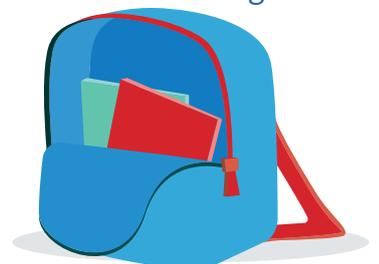
Visit gov.ie/letsgetready - Supporting Your Child's Transition

Support your Child's Independence Skills by:

- Encourage and practise independent dressing. Let children dress themselves and put on their own shoes.
- Encourage and practise independent eating. Children can help with setting out place settings and cutlery for the family meal. Children should pour their own drinks and butter their own toast (at the child's skill level). Encourage children to clean up when finished eating.
- Encourage and practise toileting. Children should use the toilet independently where possible and wash and dry their hands.
- Try not to do any task the child can do for themselves, even if it takes a bit of time.

Support your Child's Emotional Wellbeing by:

- Responding positively to your child's desire to play as much as possible inside and outside the home.
- If your child is stuck when doing something, allow them to keep trying, as this builds their perseverance and confidence.
- Discuss and name your child's feelings to help them understand their emotions and develop coping strategies to deal with different feelings. This is an important skill called 'self-regulation' and will be very important in helping children to deal with the anxiety of starting school.
- Talk to your children about primary school, what are they expecting it to be like, what are they looking forward to, or, what might they be nervous of? Reassure them of any fears.
- Visit the primary school to have a look at the building/playground and talk about how your child will get to school each day.
- If the school they will attend has a uniform, show your child some photos of the school uniform, or discuss what they will wear to school.
- Tell them about other children they may know that already attend the school, maybe you know some of their pre-school friends also going to the same primary school.
- Together with your child, set up a primary school play space over the summer including their lunch box, school bag, paper and crayons/pencils, books etc.



Teaching New Skills to Children

You are your child's first and most important teacher. Every day you are helping your child learn new information, skills and ways of behaving.

There are three useful ways you can help children learn everything from basic self-care to more complicated social skills:

instructions

step-by-step

modelling

Before you start

No matter which of the three methods you use, these tips will help your child learn new skills:

Before you start, make sure that your child is ready to learn the new skill.

Consider timing. Is your child alert?

Consider the environment. Is your child focused?

Give your child the **chance to practise** the skill.

Give encouragement.

Avoid giving lots of negative feedback if your child does not get it right.

You can use a **step-by-step approach**

Some tasks or activities are complicated or involve a sequence of actions. For these, you can break down the task into smaller steps.

The idea of step-by-step teaching is to outline the steps that make up a skill one at a time. When your child has learned the first step, then you teach the next step, then the next, and so on.

Example Skill - Putting on their t-shirt.

You could break down each of these steps into parts:

Face the t-shirt the right way.

Pull the t-shirt **over the head**.

Put **one arm** through.

Put the **other arm** through.

Pull the t-shirt **down**.

Only move on to the next skill when they have mastered this one. You can use this sequence for each item of getting dressed. Putting on their underpants, then their trousers, then their t-shirt, then their socks and finally shoes.

Be specific with encouragement – *'I see you put one sock on by yourself, try the other one now'*.

You can give instructions

We give our children instructions all the time. When teaching a new skill, here are the steps that help our instructions become learning:

Give instructions only when you have your child's attention. Use your child's name and encourage your child to look at you while you speak.

Get down to your child's physical level to speak.

Remove any background distractions like the TV.

Use language that your child understands. Keep your sentences short and simple.

Use a **clear, calm voice**.

Use **one instruction at a time**, for example; *'take off your coat.'* Then *'hang up your coat'*.

Use gestures to emphasise things that you want your child to notice.

Gradually phase out your instructions and reminders as your child gets better at remembering how to do the task.

You can use modelling

Through watching you, your child learns what to do and how to do it.

Modelling is usually the most efficient way to teach children a new skill. For example, you're more likely to show rather than tell your child how to tidy up, throw a ball, set a table or wash their hands. You can also use modelling to show your child skills and behaviour that involve non-verbal communication, like body language and tone of voice.

For example, you can show how you turn to face people when you talk to them, or look them in the eyes and smile when you thank them.

You can combine steps and modelling, for example, in social skills development. For example, if you are expecting a visitor to your home. Practise what will happen when they arrive.

Seo duit pictiúr díom agus rinne mé féin é

A picture of me for my teacher





Child's Personal Details

First name:

Likes to be known as:

Surname:

Date of birth:

Primary School and Preschool Details

Primary School child is enrolled in:

Preschool:

Name of family member completing this form

First name:

Surname:

Relationship to child:

What would you like your child's new primary school to know about him/her?

Have you any suggestions that might help your child settle into junior infants?

Is there additional information about your child that you would like to share with the primary school?



Resources to support your child's learning and development in preparing for primary school

Starting primary school is an important and exciting time for young children and parents alike. Many parents wonder if there is anything that they can do at home to support their child's learning as he/she gets ready for junior infants, and the answer is 'Yes, there is!'

This information sheet provides links to videos and tip sheets with some practical advice for parents.

Helping your child to learn through play and language



Providing opportunities for your child to play and to talk is an important way that you can support his/her learning. Watch this two-minute video to learn more about this. [Key messages for parents on supporting children's learning and development from birth to 6 years.](#)



Providing opportunities for your child to play helps him/her to build relationships, be creative, learn about numbers, think, use language and use small and large muscles. Read this tip sheet, [Information for parents: Learning and developing through play \(2 ½ to 6 years\)](#) for ideas on how to help your child to learn and develop through play.

Learning through play is important for developing your child's independence, curiosity and resilience. You might like to learn more about this in the tip sheet: [Helping young children to develop positive learning dispositions.](#)



Taking part in activities based on your child's interests is another important way to support his/her learning. Watch this two-minute video, [Supporting learning and development of children aged 4-8 years: key messages for parents.](#)



Listening to your child, having conversations and reading together, and pointing out words and notices at home and in your community will introduce him/her to the world of language—spoken and written. Read this tip sheet for more practical ideas on introducing reading and writing to your child in an age-appropriate way: [Helping your child to read and write.](#)



Visiting the library regularly will help your child to learn about books and how to use them. Your child will enjoy having a story before bedtime, and it will give you a chance to relax with him/her, to talk about the story and to introduce new words and ideas. Here is a link to a list of books that are good for this age group: [Books that promote discussion: Suggested picture book list for young children \(3 to 6 years\).](#)



Helping your child to learn about maths



If you want to find out about ways to support your child's maths skills at home then watch this two-minute video: [Supporting mathematics: key messages for parents \(3-6 years\)](#). Here you will learn about the importance of your child playing with blocks, sticks and other similar items. Talking about shapes, patterns and measurements is also great so be sure to let them help out when you are cooking, keeping a watchful eye on the score at a match, or doing the grocery shopping.



Your child has been learning about maths since they were born. Talking to your child and letting him/her take part in everyday activities like helping with the shopping, setting the table, pairing socks will help him/her with maths. Read this tip sheet for more ideas on helping your child to understand maths: [Helping your young child with maths \(3-6 years\)](#).



Maths is everywhere and one area of this is measure. Having the words to talk about measure will be helpful for your child. Read this tip sheet for examples of useful words as well as advice on how you might help your child to understand what the measurement words mean: [Information for parents: Learning about measure \(3-6 years\)](#).

Supporting your child's physical development



Developing movement skills like climbing, balancing and kicking a ball are important for your child. Read this tip sheet to find out ways to improve your child's physical development: [Nurturing children's physical well-being through Fundamental Movement Skills \(3-6 years\)](#).