

- Ask her what happened at school and try to build on what she learned. Focus on the good events of the day.
- Attend parent activities at the school, read notes sent home by the teacher and take an active role in your child's learning.
- If your child resists going to school, kindly but firmly make sure he goes. Children should realize that going to school is their job, and that it is just as important as mommy's or daddy's job. If your child never wants to go to school, try to find out why. It may help to talk to the teacher.

Anything you can do to help ease the first few days of school will help your child succeed.

Putting Knowledge to Work



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You'll find a friendly, well-trained staff ready to help you with information, advice, and free publications covering agriculture and natural resources, family and consumer sciences, 4-H and youth development.

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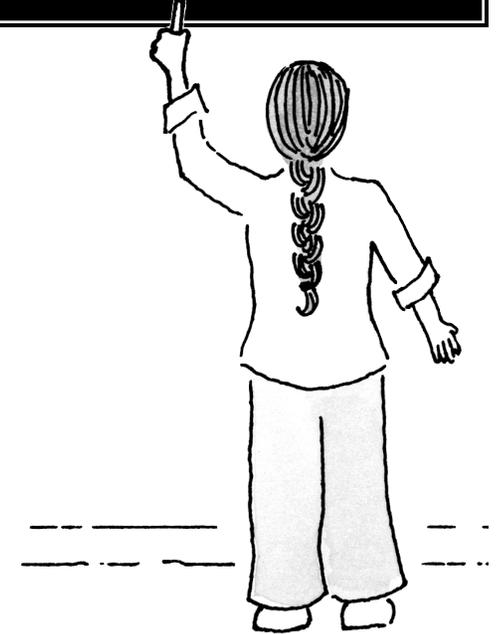
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GALE A. BUCHANAN, DEAN & DIRECTOR

TIPS FOR PARENTS

The First Day of School



The University of Georgia

Cooperative Extension Service

College of Family and Consumer Sciences
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The First Day of School

Think back to the very first time you dressed in a new outfit, grabbed a blue notebook and a new pencil, and headed out the door to school. You might have been on your way to first grade, kindergarten, or even a preschool program.



That day will always be one you remember. The first day of school is a milestone for parents and children.

How did you feel?

- For some children, it's the most exciting day of their lives, so far.
- For others it's a trip into unknown and scary territory.
- For some it's like a "graduation day," moving from being a baby to becoming a big kid!

Whether it's an exciting time or a day of terror, or somewhere in-between, the first day of school is a day of stress.

Nearly all Georgia children will go through a 4-year-old program and kindergarten before they enter first grade. Many have spent time in child care, which also helps ease the transition into school.

But even if your child has been in child care or preschool, she will still face some big changes in kindergarten or first grade. You can help her as she makes those changes.

What can you do?

Here are some tips to help ease your child's entry into the more structured setting of school:

Help your child learn social skills.

- If the child doesn't know many other children his age, introduce him to some in church, the park, or other settings.
- Invite other children over to "play school." Give them a chance to act out their feelings.

Talk about what happens at school.

- Talk about what a day at school might be like. Tell her what to expect and what her new teacher will probably expect of her.
- If she has older brothers or sisters, take advantage of their experience. Ask eight-year-old Johnny at the dinner table what his first day at school was like. (This works best when Johnny's first day was a good one!)

Help your child get used to the school.

- Take her on a tour of the school building and grounds before school starts. Most schools have a special day set aside for

this, including meeting the teacher and other classmates.



Make sure your child feels safe.

- Teach him your address and phone number. Teach him to write his name.
- Put a picture of the family in his lunchbox or notebook, or let him take a pencil box or other object he uses at home to help make him feel more at ease.
- Know the bus routes and help your child learn them.
- If your child will walk or ride a bicycle any distance to or from school, teach safety rules and talk about stranger danger, traffic, etc.
- If your child clings to you when you drop him off at school, don't push him away. He only needs a little reassurance. Give him a few minutes to adjust to the new environment.

Continue to show interest in school.

After the first day has come and gone, continue to treat school as a fun time, full of new adventures.