

Y.M. & Y.W.H.A. OF WILLIAMSBURG, INC.
TRANSITION
WORKSHOP

AGENDA

- What is the Transition and why is it so important?
- How has the Williamsburg “Y” prepared your child for Kindergarten?
- How will Kindergarten be different from UPK?
- Saying Good-bye to the Williamsburg Y.
- Tips for the Transition.
- Parent’s role in easing the changes to Kindergarten.
- Separation Anxiety – what is it and how can it be eased?

TRANSITIONS

A Transition is a *change* and for us today, the *change* is to to a different phase of life.

For young children, it is an opportunity to:

- *Begin* to recognize their own growth
- *Begin* to trust that they have the skills to meet new opportunities

LET'S GO TO KINDERGARTEN!

Starting kindergarten is an important time for young children. It has been described as “one of the major challenges” of early childhood. Children who make a *smooth* transition tend to maintain higher levels of social competence and academic achievement.



HEAD START TO KINDERGARTEN

A goal of our program from Day 1 is to prepare your child for kindergarten by:

- teaching Readiness level Reading and Math skills,
- increasing focusing, listening and attending behaviors,
- strengthening language development
- encouraging appropriate social and emotional skills.



THE TRANSITION PROCESS

- Throughout the year, our teachers prepare children for *Kindergarten* through **discussions, books** and **related activities**
- In late June, our “Moving On” ceremony honors our children’s growth and accomplishments.
- The ceremony reflects the end of one phase of learning to the next phase. (It will be held at the Williamsburg Y again this year during the last week of school. More details will be given in the coming weeks).

WHAT TO EXPECT IN KINDERGARTEN

- Although curriculums may vary from school to school, general goals focus on children building strong pre-reading skills, practicing letter formation, enhancing listening and communication skills, getting an introduction to basic math concepts, and acquiring an active interest in the world.
- To ensure our children are ready for kindergarten, our school readiness team developed a checklist based on citywide school readiness goals.



WHY IS TRANSITION IMPORTANT?

The Transition process establishes competencies critical to school success and achievement, such as:

- Experiencing change.
- Tolerating worries and concerns.
- Anticipating new opportunities.
- Developing self confidence.



TRANSITIONS (CONTINUED)

In Kindergarten your children will:

- Meet new classmates and develop friendships
- Have less formal play and socialization
- Learn over a longer school day
- Complete homework assignments
- Acclimate to different teaching styles
- Learn new subject areas

GENERAL TIPS FOR THE TRANSITION

- Transition items – ask if the Kindergarten allows them
- Bring your child shopping for school supplies and school clothes. This may help motivate them to show off and use their new goods in their new setting!
- Create a Kindergarten countdown!
- Have your child spend time with other children that are in the school they are going to or even to another elementary school.



TIPS TO HELP YOU PREPARE YOUR CHILD FOR KINDERGARTEN

- **Help them to develop independence at home**
- **Focus on self-help skills**
- **Teach responsibility**
- **Develop and follow routines**
- **Read aloud to your child**
- **Engage them in meaningful literacy activities**
- **Acknowledge their feelings**



What Kindergarteners Need to Know to Succeed

We asked more than 100 teachers what children need to know on the first day of kindergarten:
Here are 20 skills that help them get off to a good start:

SOCIAL SKILLS

- Express feelings or wants verbally—that is, use words rather than hitting another child.
- Demonstrate knowledge of basic conversational rules, such as taking turns talking without interrupting.
- Speak clearly and in full sentences, both one-to-one with an adult and in class discussions.
- Share and take turns when playing with other children and use good manners—saying please and thank you, for example.
- Follow class routines with only occasional reminders.

READING, WRITING & LISTENING

- Enjoy looking at books and imitate reading behaviors such as turning pages one by one.
- Recognize most of the letters of the alphabet by sight, both upper and lower case.
- Can hold a pencil using the correct grip.
- Can write first name using capital and lower case letters; can form letters from the top down.
- Can sit still long enough to listen to a story.

EVERYDAY SKILLS

- Use the bathroom by themselves and wash their hands.
- Take their coats off and hang them up; and put their coats on, including fasteners (zippers, buttons).
- Know and respond to their proper names, rather than just nicknames.
- Have self-help skills, such as opening their own snacks.
- Use scissors, pencils and crayons.
- Understand two or three-step instructions—e.g., "Get your jackets, put them on, and then get into line."

NUMBERS AND COLORS

- Identify and describe squares, circles, triangles and rectangles.
- Name common colors.
- Recognize one-digit numerals and count up to ten objects.
- Sort common objects into groups—e.g., they can "put all the cars together."

TRANSITION TIPS OVER THE SUMMER

June:

- Saying “goodbye” is an important part of the Transition. Celebrate preschool while showing excitement about all of the new adventures of kindergarten. Perhaps, make a scrapbook of their fun in Pre-K, help your child make or write a thank-you note to their preschool teacher or have a preschool graduation party.

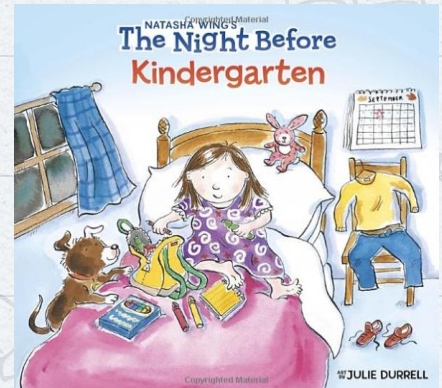
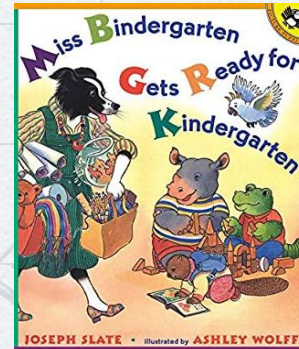
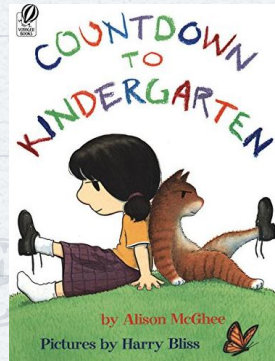
July:

- Relax



TRANSITION TIPS OVER THE SUMMER

- Read children's books about going back to school or starting kindergarten. Books about the topic include:
 - "The Night Before Kindergarten" by Natasha Wing,
 - "A Place Called Kindergarten" by Jessica Harper,
 - "Miss Bindergarten Gets Ready for Kindergarten" by Joseph Slate, and
 - "Countdown to Kindergarten" by Alison McGhee.



TIPS - AUGUST

- Remind your child about kindergarten- small reminders, maybe a “count-down calendar.”
- Re-establish school time “sleep and wake-up” routines.
- Read a soothing bedtime story every night to help your child fall asleep with comforting thoughts. (Avoid the news or violent programs in the evening.)
- Role play solutions to saying “hi” or “can I play”? (Role-playing gives your child a safe way to explore new experiences and practice solutions while dealing with change).

TIPS CLOSER TO SCHOOL

Go through your morning (or evening) school routine for at least a week before school:

- Prepare clothes to be worn that day.
- Practice getting ready for the day (brushing teeth, playing with a toy).
- Prepare the backpack so it is ready to go.
- Eat breakfast (whatever your routine is, having it established over a few days gives your child comfort that something in their world is predictable).



PARENTS' ROLE

- Approach the first day of kindergarten with a positive attitude.
- Keep first few days calm so your child remains as calm as possible.
- Keep those tears to yourself as they leave for kindergarten
- Avoid arguments over things like eating breakfast or wearing certain outfits.



HOW ELSE CAN YOU PREPARE

- **Send a note to the nurse and to the teacher if your child has allergies or special needs.** Do this even if you have indicated this on other forms already. It may be critical for teachers to know that your child reacts to bee stings, has food allergies, or has hearing or vision modifications. As a parent, you have the responsibility to advocate for your child's health and safety.
- **Label everything.** Make sure to label backpacks, lunch boxes - everything your child brings to school. This includes her! If your child's school has not supplied a nametag, make one. It should have your child's name, address, and a phone number where a parent/guardian can be reached, the name of the teacher, and how your child gets home from school.

ON THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

- Give your child a **smile** and a **hug**, say you **love** them, you'll see them **later** and wave goodbye.
- If you can, be more specific with **later**. Mention a specific time and a concrete activity, for example "I will pick you up before lunchtime and we will have lunch together."
- Wait to speak with the teacher. They have many children to tend to that first day.



"LIFE HAPPENS"

Stay Calm

WHAT IS YOUR ROLE AS A PARENT

During the 1st week of school:

- Be supportive
- Instill a sense of confidence in your child.
- Set aside a time, each evening, to share your child's day.
- Read everything the school sends home.
- Manage Separation Anxiety
- Enjoy being the parent of a kindergartner!



WHAT YOU CAN DO...

Kindergarten teachers are passionate about partnering with the families of their students.

When families and teachers work together, kids win!

- Welcome your child's kindergarten teachers as an important partner in your child's development.
- Tell the teacher that you sincerely want to work with them to help your child learn and grow.
- Ask the teacher to offer specific ideas and strategies that will involve you in your child's learning.
- Ask the teacher the best way to access information about the classroom and the school.
- Share with the teacher your preferred method of communication.
- Tell your child's teacher about the unique characteristics of your family.
- Let the teacher know about family changes and challenges at home that may impact your child's attitudes and behaviors at school.

SEPARATION ANXIETY

It's natural for your young child to feel uncomfortable, even frightened, when you say goodbye. Separation anxiety is a normal stage of development and is most intense with young children. With understanding and comforting words, separation anxiety can be eased—and should fade as your child gets older.



SIGNS OF SEPARATION ANXIETY

- Withdrawal behaviors
- Poor sleeping and/or eating behaviors
- Whining
- Temper tantrums
- Some regression
- Some children are fine for a few days and then become upset. That, too, is normal



EASING WORRIES

- Acknowledge their feelings.
- Teach them some deep breathing exercises.
- Distract them.
- Read books about going to Kindergarten.
- Extra hugs and kisses.
- Assure them that you'll return.
- Discuss doing something they enjoy after school.



DEALING WITH SEPARATION ANXIETY

- **Practice separation** with a “goodbye” ritual.
- **Keep familiar surroundings when possible and make new surroundings familiar.**
- **Leave without fanfare.** Tell your child you are leaving and that you will return, then *go*—don’t stall.
- **Minimize scary television.** Your child is less likely to be fearful if the shows you watch are not frightening.
- **Try not to give in.** Reassure your child that he or she will be just fine—setting limits will help the adjustment to separation.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Over the years, parents have worried that the public school is so much bigger than our Head Start and how safe will the children be.

Try to remember:

- Schools have welcomed Kindergarten children for years.
- Principals and teachers are experienced and familiar with these young children and have the skills to welcome, comfort and ease them into their new setting.
- Wait to ask the teacher your specific question



THANK YOU!

From the entire staff, it has been our pleasure and honor to educate your children and to know you. Please remember that you will always be a part of this Head Start Family and we are so very grateful for all you have given to us! We will always be here for you!

