

Pre-School Pages



A newsletter for parents of pre-schoolers
 packed with food, facts & fun
 from your local county extension office

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Celebrate: Back to School



Summer has flown by and it's time to head to school! These tips can make the first day of preschool (and the days after) a more manageable experience for your

little one – and for you.

First Day of Preschool Tip 1: Don't rush through the morning.

No one likes to race through the school morning routine – especially on the first day. So get everyone up at a reasonable hour. That way, you won't have to hurry your child as he munches through his morning meal – or risk being late because you had to tame a tantrum.

First Day of Preschool Tip 2: Arrive fashionably early.

This way, your little one can slowly settle in before the real action starts. He'll also get more face time with the teacher, too, which will be tougher to do once all the other kids are there to vie for her attention.

First Day of Preschool Tip 3: Bring a comfort object.

If the preschool allows it, let your child bring along his favorite stuffed animal (or blanket, or whatever object does the trick) so the new setting doesn't feel so scary. And once your child feels comfortable with his surroundings, he'll let go of his lovey – or at least leave it in his cubby when he plays. (If there's a no-lovey rule at school, follow these steps to help him separate from his security object at school.)

First Day of Preschool Tip 4: Put on a happy face.

Anxiety may be eating you up inside, but don't let on – nerves are highly contagious. If your tone's upbeat

and you seem confident that your child will have a good time, there's a better chance that he'll be upbeat, too.

First Day of Preschool Tip 5: Hang around, but don't hover.

Many preschools let (or even encourage that) parents stay in the classroom for all or part of the first few days, so if you can swing it, stick around. Knowing that you're within clinging distance will give your kid the courage to explore his new digs. Then, as your child feels more secure, gradually melt into the background. Your goal is to let the teacher take over so you can get on with your day.

First Day of Preschool Tip 6: Keep good-byes short and sweet.

When it's your cue to make an exit, hold back your tears a little longer (smiling helps unscrunch those furrows in your worried brow), give your new preschooler a hug, and let him know when you'll be back ("I'll pick you up after lunch"). Then head out – don't linger (he can't get on with his day until you do). And no matter how tempting, never sneak out when your preschooler is looking the other way. It'll make him feel insecure and less trusting.

Just remember, it's normal for kids to have a meltdown when it's time to separate (though many don't). But even if your child is crying and upset, chances are he'll be fine five minutes after you walk out the door. If it's taking a while for your little one to adjust, don't panic – preschool teachers (and their assistants) have seen it all and they know just what to do, so ask his teacher for help.



<https://www.whattoexpect.com/toddler/starting-preschool/first-day.aspx>



Let's Eat!

Getting back to school is all about learning new routines. There's no better time to develop healthier snacking habits. Packaged snack foods can be an easy,



convenient choice for after school, but often provide too many added calories and not enough nutrition. Keeping healthier snacks handy will make it easier for kids to eat well when they come home hungry. Snacks don't have to be complicated! A snack can be something like ½ sandwich, cheese and crackers, cheese and fruit, celery and peanut butter, ready to eat salad, or a bowl of soup. Almost anything can be a healthy snack if it is a small portion of a food that is low in added sugar, fat and salt. Here are some basic tips for making healthy snacks an easy choice for you and your kids:

Let older kids make their own snacks by keeping healthy foods in the kitchen.

- Prepare snacks that include two or more food groups such as whole wheat crackers with peanut butter.
- Store sliced vegetables in the refrigerator and serve with hummus.
- Prepare a green salad with veggies on the weekend, and store in the fridge for a ready-to-eat salad after school during the week. Add grated carrots, sliced peppers, radishes and celery, cherry tomatoes and other veggies that stay fresh longer.
- Top half of a whole-wheat English muffin with spaghetti sauce, chopped vegetables, and low-fat shredded mozzarella and melt in the microwave.
- Fresh, frozen, dried, or canned fruits, such as applesauce, frozen grapes, or raisins, can be easy "grab-and-go" options that need little preparation. Offer whole fruit and limit the amount of 100% juice served. Choose canned fruits that are lowest in added sugars.

<http://csetompkins.org/resources/healthy-afterschool-snack-tips>

Celery Snails & Caterpillars

INGREDIENTS

SNAILS

- celery stalks
- Peanut butter or cream cheese, at room temperature
- sliced apple
- Sliced orange
- Sliced kiwi
- sliced cucumber
- Sliced tomato
- Cashews

CATERPILLARS

- celery stalks
- Peanut butter or cream cheese, at room temperature
- Grapes
- blueberries
- grape tomatoes
- Candy eyes
- Celery or radish matchsticks

DIRECTIONS

1. **Make the Snails:** Fill celery stalks with peanut butter or cream cheese and top with an apple, orange, kiwi, cucumber or tomato slice shell and a cashew head. Use peanut butter or cream cheese to glue on candy eyes.
2. **Make the Caterpillars:** Fill celery stalks with peanut butter or cream cheese and top with grapes, blueberries or grape tomatoes for the body and head. Use peanut butter or cream cheese to glue on candy eyes and celery or radish matchstick for antennae.

<https://www.womansday.com/food-recipes/food-drinks/recipes/a55811/celery-snails-caterpillars-recipe/>

Sincerely,

Brooke Hogancamp



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