

Tips for children transitioning to primary school

Starting primary school will naturally bring up a range of different emotions for parents, carers and children.

Here are a few tips and things to keep in mind that'll help you to best support your child during this time:

- Be aware and mindful that starting school can bring on lots of different emotions, such as, excitement, fear, curiosity and worry
- Be brave enough to talk about these emotions with your child—it will bring you closer
- Actively listen to your child and help them name these emotions
- Let your child know that it is normal to feel like this when things are new. You can give some examples of your own experience to help your child to understand
- Reassure your child that these feelings won't last – feelings are like the weather and change often throughout the day

For primary school children, navigating a range of new and different relationships can be hard work. It can help to:

- Help your child develop confidence in expressing themselves respectfully
- Arrange play dates with other kids in their class to help them establish friendships
- Get to know the other parents
- Encourage your child to explore different friendships by sitting with different groups at break times
- Read books about being a friend
- Set time aside at the end of the day to talk.

Love in a Lunch Box—here are some simple ways to help them out at recess or lunch time:

- Pack familiar food
- Provide food that your child can easily open or unwrap
- Add a personalised note that will help to brighten their day or make them laugh—it will let them know you are thinking about them
- Have your child practice opening and closing their lunchbox, unwrapping plastic film and opening containers, packaging and zip-lock bags so it becomes second nature for them.

Some children require additional support at school. They may struggle to connect socially, find it hard to concentrate in class or fall behind their peers in basic literacy and numeracy.

If you have concerns about your child's development, speaking to an empathetic and non-judgemental Parent Line NSW counsellor may help you find the right strategies, support and referral pathways for you and your child.

Managing Transitions

It's normal for kids to be exhausted after a day at school, which can sometimes lead to emotional meltdowns. All that learning and navigating new relationships is draining, especially for children. It can help to have established afternoon routines, which allow for some down-time. Family meal time is also a good place to ask your child about their day and reconnect.

Rituals for the end of the day, week, term and year will help your child transition more smoothly. Rituals might be cooking your child's favourite meal together, watching a movie or going for an afternoon walk. Transitioning to school is a big thing for parents too—parents are often caught off-guard by their own feelings of excitement, sadness and nervousness at sending a child to school.



Our qualified Parent Line NSW counsellors can help you to come to terms with and manage complex feelings that come with your child starting school.

To connect with our qualified and experienced team, **call 1300 1300 52** for immediate and confidential telephone counselling.

You can also visit parentline.org.au to find more parenting resources, stories and expert tips.

**Parent Line NSW
is open 7 days a
week for support:**
Mon-Fri (9am to 9pm)
Sat & Sun (4pm to 9pm)