

How parents can ease transition to first grade

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Remain positive with your child, get involved in school life, expert says.

(HealthDay)—Parents can smooth a child's transition from kindergarten to the new demands of first grade, an expert says.

"The sudden introduction of new skills and responsibilities of first grade can be an exciting yet [stressful experience](#) for both the [child](#) and their parents," said Beth Pendergraft, an early childhood coordinator in the department of [teacher education](#) at Georgia Regents University.

"However, if parents can remain positive and patient with their child along with keeping open communication with the [teacher](#), it will help everyone get a good grip on this new journey," she said in a university news release.

You can talk to your child's teacher to find out what skills will be taught

during the [school](#) year and incorporate those skills into daily family routines, she suggested. Also, try to give your child an idea of what to expect in class, including activities, tests and making new friends.

Serving nutritious foods will help your child focus at school, and establishing firm bedtime and morning routines can also ease the switch to first grade, Pendergraft said.

Parents also need to help new first-graders develop independence. When kids complete a task, reward them and encourage them to work on a new task. She said it's always important to reinforce the "you-can-do-it" approach.

Involvement in your children's school life is as important as being involved with them at home, she added. Parents need to check with teachers about curriculum updates and details about their youngster's progress, and be aware of lessons in case they want to do supplemental work at home, Pendergraft said.

More information: The American Academy of Pediatrics offers advice to parents about [school](#).

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