







## Preparing Your Child for Grade Primary



School readiness is built through your child’s experiences before entry to grade primary. Family support is important in shaping these experiences. Children take great pride in being able to do things independently. Here are some tips to improve your child’s success as they participate in school routines throughout their first year at big school!

**Dressing Routines** - Practice full dressing/undressing routines at home prior to starting school.

Shoes / Boots	<p><i>Start With:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Velcro straps or slip-on shoes</li> <li>• Well-fitting shoes made of firm material with a rigid heel cup</li> <li>• Placing stickers on the inside edge of each shoe as a visual to line up to help shoes go on correct feet</li> </ul> <p><i>Next Step:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Laces (no-tie elastic laces if needed) or buckles</li> </ul>	
Socks	<p><i>Start with:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ankle socks (larger opening for feet)</li> <li>• Socks with colored heels (to show which side is down)</li> </ul>	
Pants	<p><i>Start With:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elastic waist bands, loose fitting</li> </ul> <p><i>Next Step:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buttons (large buttons are easier than smaller, vertical button holes easier than horizontal), belts, snaps</li> </ul>	
Jacket / Coats	<p><i>Start With:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large, sturdy zipper (instead of buttons/snaps)</li> <li>• Add a zipper pull (key ring, zipper charm) to make the tab easier to grasp</li> <li>• Avoid multiple flaps covering the zipper; if there is a flap, check that it can be folded back and can stay out of the way easily</li> </ul>	
Hats	<p><i>Start With:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pull on; Velcro chin straps</li> </ul>	
Scarves	<p><i>Start With:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neck warmer/neck tube/infinity scarf that does not need to be tied</li> </ul>	
Gloves	<p><i>Start With:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mittens or rigid gloves (instead of tight/stretchy)</li> <li>• Mittens that go <u>over</u> the coat sleeves</li> <li>• Mittens that attach together through sleeve of coat</li> </ul>	

*Modified from CanChild: planning your child’s kindergarten wardrobe*

## Increasing Independence with Managing Supplies, Sleep and Washroom Routines

Backpacks	<p><i>Look For:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wide, well-padded, adjustable and curved shaped shoulder straps</li> <li>• A wide waist and chest belt for even weight distribution</li> <li>• Large enough bag to hold lunch bag &amp; books</li> <li>• Sturdy zippers; zipper pulls may be added to make zipper easier to hold onto</li> <li>• To ensure fit, have child try the backpack on fully loaded before buying it</li> <li>• Adjust the pack so the bottom sits 2" above the waist</li> <li>• Pack heavy items on top and along back of the pack (closest to child)</li> <li>• The child to practice packing, opening and closing their school/lunch bags</li> </ul> <p><i>Avoid:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over-packing!</li> <li>• Wearing only one shoulder strap</li> <li>• Backpacks that unzip to the very bottom of the bag (more difficult to pack)</li> <li>• A child carrying more than 10% of their body weight</li> </ul> 
Lunch Bag & Containers	<p><i>Look For:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large enough bag to hold lunch &amp; snack foods</li> <li>• Drink container with flip-up straw or plastic juice box holders</li> <li>• Easy to open food containers (snap-lock lids)</li> <li>• Pre-snip food packages to make easier to tear open (granola bars)</li> <li>• Practice opening containers (screw-on/flip-off lids, zip-lock bags) by putting fun items inside</li> </ul> <p><i>Avoid:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Too small of a lunch bag requiring everything to fit "just right"</li> <li>• Pouch drinks/juice boxes if the child has: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ difficulty inserting the straw</li> <li>○ difficulty using appropriate hand pressure to hold the box (a juice box holder may help - practice at home before sending)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> 
Sleep	<p><i>Aim For:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 11-12 hours of sleep per night</li> </ul> <p><i>Avoid:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electronic devices before bedtime (TV, computer, iPad)</li> </ul>
Using the Washroom	<p><i>To Try:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage your child to participate in flushing toilet, pulling up/down own pants, washing and drying hands (model how to do properly), wiping, urinal use for boys both at home and in public washrooms</li> <li>• Feet properly supported on the floor or a stool when on toilet</li> </ul> <p><i>Avoid:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pants that are hard to pull up/down</li> <li>• Feet dangling above the floor when on the toilet</li> </ul>