

Ready or Not, Here Comes School: Preparing Your Child from Newborn to School Age

The first day of school is a big milestone for both children and parents. It's a time of excitement, nerves, and a lot of preparation. But how do you know if your child is ready for school? And what can you do to help them succeed?



Ready or Not Here Comes School - Preparing Your Child from Newborn to School Age by Dr. Barbara Sorrels

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The good news is that there are many things you can do to prepare your child for school, even from a young age. Here are a few tips:

Newborn to 1 Year

- **Talk to your baby.** Even though they may not understand what you're saying, talking to your baby helps them develop language skills. Sing songs, read stories, and narrate your day-to-day activities.
- **Play with your baby.** Play helps babies develop physical, cognitive, and social skills. Encourage your baby to explore their surroundings,

play with toys, and interact with other people.

- **Encourage curiosity.** Babies are naturally curious, so encourage them to explore their surroundings. Let them touch, taste, and smell different things. Answer their questions and help them learn about the world around them.

1 to 3 Years

- **Continue talking to your child.** As your child grows, continue to talk to them and expand their vocabulary. Encourage them to ask questions and have conversations with you.
- **Read to your child.** Reading to your child is one of the best ways to help them develop language and literacy skills. Start reading to your child as early as possible, even if they're too young to understand the words.
- **Play educational games.** Educational games can help children learn about a variety of subjects, including math, science, and social studies. Choose games that are appropriate for your child's age and interests.
- **Encourage independence.** As your child grows, encourage them to do things for themselves, such as getting dressed, eating, and using the toilet. This will help them develop self-confidence and independence.
- **Set limits.** It's important to set limits for your child, but do so in a positive and supportive way. Explain the reasons for your limits and help your child understand the consequences of breaking them.
- **Praise your child.** Praising your child for their efforts, even if they don't always succeed, will help them build self-esteem.

3 to 5 Years

- **Continue reading to your child.** As your child grows, continue to read to them and introduce them to new and more challenging books.
- **Help your child learn about math and science.** Math and science are important subjects that will help your child succeed in school. There are many fun and easy ways to teach your child about these subjects, such as playing games and doing experiments.
- **Encourage creativity.** Creativity is an important skill that will help your child in all areas of their life. Encourage your child to express themselves through art, music, and other creative activities.
- **Help your child make friends.** Making friends is an important part of growing up. Encourage your child to interact with other children and help them develop social skills.

5 to School Age

- **Talk to your child about school.** As your child gets closer to school age, start talking to them about what to expect. Explain what school is, what they will learn, and how it will be different from preschool or daycare.
- **Visit the school.** If possible, take your child to visit the school they will be attending. This will help them become familiar with the building and staff, and it will make the first day of school less stressful.
- **Practice school routines.** Start practicing school routines, such as getting dressed, packing a lunch, and doing homework, in the months leading up to the first day of school. This will help your child adjust to the new schedule and expectations.

- **Promote independence.** Encourage your child to be as independent as possible. This means helping them learn to do things for themselves, such as tying their shoes, brushing their teeth, and putting away their toys.
- **Set expectations.** It's important to set expectations for your child, both academically and behaviorally. Explain what you expect from them in terms of homework, grades, and behavior, and provide them with the support they need to succeed.
- **Praise your child.** Praising your child for their efforts, even if they don't always succeed, will help them build self-esteem.

Preparing your child for school is a journey, not a destination. There will be ups and downs along the way, but by following these tips, you can help your child succeed in school and beyond.

Additional Tips for Parents of Children with Disabilities

If your child has a disability, there are additional things you can do to prepare them for school. Here are a few tips:

* **Talk to your child's doctor or therapist.** They can provide you with information and resources to help your child prepare for school. * **Visit the school with your child.** This will help you and your child become familiar with the building and staff, and it will make the first day of school less stressful. * **Meet with the school staff.** Explain your child's disability to the school staff and discuss their needs. This will help the staff provide your child with the support they need to succeed. * **Create a plan for your child.** This plan should outline your child's needs and how the school will

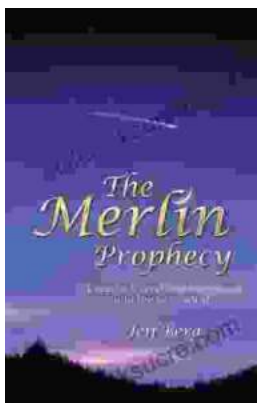
meet those needs. * **Stay involved in your child's education.** Attend parent-teacher conferences,



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