



The Simcoe County District School Board produces this regular e-bulletin to help parents support children on their journey of lifelong learning. We know positive connections between home and school support student achievement. In each edition you'll find practical tips and strategies to help your child achieve success in those important years of learning from Kindergarten to Grade 12.

Bringing School Home is available through the Simcoe County District School Board website (www.scdsb.on.ca). As well, parents, guardians and other interested members of our school communities may subscribe through our website and have the bulletin e-mailed directly to their e-mail accounts. (Readers may also unsubscribe at any time.) Please send your comments and feedback to: webadmin@scdsb.on.ca.

Questions of the month:

Now that my child is registered to start Kindergarten, what should I do to prepare us for September?

Starting school is a big step in the life of your child. It is our shared responsibility to ensure that the first school experience is a time of excitement and accomplishment. Simcoe County District School Board Kindergarten teachers strive to provide enriched, varied and positive experiences that will be the building blocks for future learning and academic success.

Working together as active partners, parents and school staff can help to ensure all children fully develop their potential. Education is a life-long pursuit that begins at home.

Preparing to start school

One very important way to prepare your child for kindergarten is to establish a daily routine. For example, have breakfast at the kitchen table each morning and then have your child put the dirty dishes in the sink before getting dressed for school. Eat lunch and dinner at a certain time each day if possible and put your child to bed at the same time each night. Before bed, brush their

teeth, put on pyjamas, and get in bed and read a story together. Establishing a consistent bedtime that helps your child have 11 or 12 hours of sleep daily is crucial for healthy development.

In kindergarten, there is a time to sit, a time to read, a time to play, a time to eat lunch, a time to go outside, etc. By introducing routine early and stick by it at home you will be making the transition to the classroom easier.

Before the first day

As your child's first day of school creeps up, you will be excited that he's old enough to start school and you will wonder if he will adjust to the new routine.

Your child may also be excited, and a bit overwhelmed by the thought of spending time away from you. Similarly, for a child who is already in a childcare setting, spending part of the day in junior or senior kindergarten may pose new challenges.

Before the official first full day, your child will have an opportunity to visit the classroom with you. Parents and children will meet the Kindergarten teacher, become familiar with the new surroundings and have an opportunity to ask questions.

It's also a good idea to visit the school yard during the summer before Kindergarten and to spend some time at the playground if possible. Walk the route to school with your child a few times during the summer or, if your child is in a busing zone, walk to the bus stop and talk about taking the bus to school. That way, when the big day arrives, your child will have a good idea about what to expect.

On the first full day of school

It's important to get up in plenty of time on the first day of school to avoid rushing. The morning should be calm and positive and you should talk about the fun things your child will be doing at school. Make sure you arrive at school or at the bus stop on time to avoid any unnecessary stress.

Saying goodbye

When it is time to say goodbye at school, reassure your child that you know that everything will be fine and the day will be fun. Give your child a kiss goodbye and then leave quickly. Remember, it is usually easier for a tearful child to calm down when the parent is not there.

How can I help my child at home?

Learning begins at home and continues there throughout the school years. Reading aloud is the best way to prepare children for learning to read. It will help them develop a wide range of language skills needed for success in school and throughout life. And, there are many other fun

things you and your child can do together.

Share your own stories about school – what was it like for you when you started. If there are older siblings have them join in also. Include your child in the preparation for school. This can be as simple as deciding on snacks to send each day or buying school supplies.

Have fun and enjoy growing up together!

Starting school is often seen as a sign of being a "big boy". Talk to your child about how he feels about school. Being a "big boy" may be just what he wants or the prospect may be overwhelming. Be sensitive to his feelings and gently continue to talk about the wonderful things that happen at school.

This month's featured web pages

We invite you to visit www.scdsb.on.ca often for news, facts, school information, Board highlights and hundreds of other pages about Simcoe County's public education system. This month we are featuring our "Kindergarten Registration" web page:

http://www.scdsb.on.ca/programs/kindergarten_ps.cfm

Our Internet surfing this month leads to information about Ontario's Early Years Centres:

<http://www.ontarioearlyyears.ca/oeyc/en/home.htm>

Next Issue

The next issue of *Bringing School Home* will feature 'Parent Involvement in Education.'

Quote of the month

"If parents understood the huge educational benefits and intense happiness brought about by reading aloud to their children, and if every parent – and adult caring for a child – read aloud a minimum of three stories a day to the children in their lives, we could probably wipe out illiteracy within one generation." ~ Mem Fox, Reading Magic, 2001.

The Simcoe County District School Board is deeply committed to ensuring all learners have the opportunity to realize their dreams within a vibrant and successful public education system. We are very proud of our 57,000 students who are learning and achieving in our 108 schools and six adult learning centres throughout our urban and rural communities. Working with school communities, our dedicated and skilled staff members provide quality programs to help students develop lifelong learning skills in safe, caring environments. Our schools are located in the Huronia and Georgian Bay regions of south-central Ontario.



Simcoe County
District School Board