**Preparing your child for preschool.**

**Work on self-help skills.**Going to preschool marks a big developmental leap for your child and independence will become a larger focus. [Help your child master self-help skills](http://blogs.brighthorizons.com/familyroom/10-activities-to-encourage-preschool-independence/) like washing her hands, dressing themselves, putting shoes and socks on, and using utensils at the table.

**Work on your child’s toileting independence**.  Your child should be able to manage themselves on the toilet without assistance including wiping.  We can assist with pulling clothing up and down but it is best if they can be as independent as possible.  We provide stools for the toilet and the sink.  Be sure your child’s clothing is loose enough that they can become successful at pulling up and down.

**Express and acknowledge feelings.** Beginning preschool is an exciting adventure, but it's normal for both of you to have feelings of anxiety. To [help your child deal with the change anxiety](http://www.brighthorizons.com/family-resources/e-family-news/helping-children-deal-with-change-and-stress/), allow your child to express those feelings. Listen closely and acknowledge your child's fears. At the same time, acknowledge to yourself your own feelings of ambivalence. You might also notice changes in your child's behavior as he works through his feelings. Children often regress in one area as they make developmental growth in another. Children sometimes regress in toilet training or become less independent. With nurturing support, these behavior changes are only temporary.

**Shift your schedule.** As your child experiences her first few weeks of preschool, gradually make any necessary changes in your routines. Work to create a calm, peaceful environment at home. Limit media. Enjoy [family meals](http://www.brighthorizons.com/family-resources/e-family-news/2014-family-meals-importance-of-quality-time/) together and make sure your child goes to bed at a reasonable hour. Offer a healthy breakfast and spend time outdoors. Developing consistent, predictable routines a few weeks before school starts will make the transition much smooth.

**Read books.** Spend time reading books about preschool, such as *Maisy Goes to Preschool* by Lucy Cousins, *Llama Llama Misses Mama* by Anna Dewdney,*Little School* by Beth Norling, or *The Kissing Hand* by Audrey Penn.

**Act it out.** Use your child's penchant for [pretend play](http://www.brighthorizons.com/family-resources/e-family-news/2013-importance-of-pretend-play-in-child-development/) to prepare him for preschool. Pretend that you're going to school, hanging up your backpack, and sitting down for group time. Play games, read stories, and make a simple snack. Teach your child a few basic social skills. Talk about how to get someone's attention, take turns, or join in play. Use puppets to role play.

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