Early Childhood

Transition to Kindergarten

The transition to kindergarten is an important time in your child's life; making sure this transition is as smooth as possible is important, especially if your child has a disability. As a parent/guardian there are things you can do to be better prepared and equipped to support your child as they adjust to a new setting.

If Your Child Already Has an Individualized Education Program (IEP)

During your child's last year of preschool:

- Meet with the IEP team to develop a transition plan
  - Discuss which school and classroom your child will attend in the fall
  - Ask for someone from the school to attend the meeting to help plan the transition
  - Collaborate with school staff to identify the services & supports that will be provided to address your child's goals in the new setting
  - Identify the type of home/school communication that will be used
  - You may want to consider asking for an IEP meeting 45-60 days after school begins (this can be added to the Supplementary Aids, Services, Program Modifications and Supports section of your child's IEP)
    - This will ensure that there is a meeting to discuss how things are going for your child and make any changes to the IEP that are needed to support their success at school
  - Ask any questions you may have, such as:
    - How do I enroll my child in kindergarten?
    - How can I prepare my child for this transition?





If Your Child Does *Not* Have an IEP But You Believe He/She Needs One

No fewer than 90 days before your child begins Kindergarten:

- Contact the special education director or Child Find office in your school system if your child is not enrolled in the public school system.
  - If your child is in public school, you can contact the principal or your child's teacher.
- Request – **in writing** – that your child be evaluated to determine their eligibility for an IEP
  - Here is a sample letter for making this request: Requesting an Initial Evaluation for Special Education Services
- Here are some guides to understanding the special education process and your rights/responsibilities:
  - Special Education Process
  - A Family Companion Guide to Maryland's Parental Rights and Procedural Safeguards Notice: Maryland Infants and Toddlers Program



The Parents' Place of Maryland • 802 Cromwell Park Drive • Suite H • Glen Burnie MD 21061
Phone 410-768-9100 • Fax 410-768-0830 • ppmd.org/contact • www.ppmd.org

October 2025

PPMD's information, resources, and trainings can be made available in languages other than English, including sign language upon request. Please contact us regarding your translation and interpretation needs.

The summer before kindergarten begins



- Engage in activities at home that will help prepare your child for kindergarten, such as:
    - Reading books about going to kindergarten
    - Establishing bedtime, morning, and other routines that will fit with the new school schedule
- Ask to visit your child's school and kindergarten classroom with your child – and meet their new teacher(s) – prior to the beginning of the school year
    - During the visit, share information about your child
        - You may want to provide a short information sheet about your child to help their teacher get to know them. Here are some templates you might use:
            - All About Me: A fillable sheet to support your child across service delivery models – Maryland State Department of Education
            - All About Me EDITABLE Worksheet



    - While you talk with the teacher, encourage your child to explore their new classroom

Once school starts

- Keep the lines of communication open
- Remember: If you have concerns, you can ask for an IEP meeting!



Additional Resources

- Transitions to Kindergarten | NAEYC
- Your Child's Move from Preschool Special Education to Kindergarten
- Parents' Perspectives on School: Tips and Transitions
- A Family Guide To Early Childhood Transitions In Maryland Birth to Kindergarten