



# Early Learning Digest

Research-based early childhood development information provided by Lifetrack

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## Saying Goodbye to Preschool

Children moving from preschool to kindergarten often feel anxious about making friends, finding their way around, and liking their new teacher. During this transition period, encourage your child to discuss feelings. Talk often about the events of the last year in preschool and provide opportunities to stay in touch with preschool classmates. In addition, consider the following transition activities for parents and children:

- Plan a visit to your child's school before the first day of kindergarten to meet her new teacher. Take her on a tour of the classroom, and allow time for your child to explore and talk about all the exciting things she sees.
- Plan playdates with new classmates so your child can familiarize herself with new faces, and begin to develop new relationships. After your child is comfortable in kindergarten, plan playdates with old friends.
- Consider reading some books about starting school, such as **Look Out, Kindergarten, Here I Come!** by Nancy Carlson; **Will I Have a Friend?** by Miriam Cohen, illustrated by Ronald Himler;



- and **If You Take a Mouse to School**, by Laura Numeroff, illustrated by Felicia Bond.
- Describe the daily routine to your child so she knows what to expect on her first day. Discuss arrival, breakfast, snack, lunch, and bathroom practices. She will want to know what will be the same as preschool and what will be different.

The transition from preschool to kindergarten can be a stressful time for children and parents. The more you discuss this transition in a matter-of-fact way, the more comfortable your child will become.

Sources: Retrieved from <http://families.naeyc.org/learning-and-development/child-development/saying-goodbye-preschool-and-hello-kindergarten>.

## Child Guidance for Baby

Your baby seems to be on the move constantly. This is a time when extra patience is needed. Your baby is starting to get into things you may not want him to have. Because everything he picks up goes into his mouth, it is time to think about safety.

Babies under 1 year old are too young to understand why they should stop doing something. Your baby may enjoy throwing things. He likes to hear the noise and watch toys bounce. To him, it's a game and he is learning where things go when they drop. There are a few things you can do to allow your baby to explore his surroundings while keeping him safe.

Put away things that are dangerous or could break and hurt your baby. Your baby needs and wants to explore, so baby-proof your house rather than following him around saying no to everything he does. That approach is exhausting for you and upsetting for your baby who learns by touching and exploring.

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If you have concerns about your child's growth and development, please talk to your child's health care provider or go to [www.helpmegrowmn.org](http://www.helpmegrowmn.org)





## Explore the Outdoors with Your Child

Exploring the outdoors is an opportunity for children to use their senses and participate in fun learning activities. By setting some basic boundaries you can let your child discover what is happening around him. He will touch what he can reach, smell the fresh scents of nature, and occasionally taste when given permission. Allow him to climb, dig, run, and jump as he discovers new places and things. Here are a few steps to guide your child's exploration of the great outdoors:

**Explore safely** - Dress appropriately, prepare for sun and bugs, and teach your child the basic safety rules of the outdoors.

**Allow Your Child To Choose What To Explore** - See what he does on his own without offering suggestions. Does he run, build or climb? Simple activities lead to exploration. Your child will learn how to dig, the way soil feels, the angle of the slope before loose dirt slides back down, and the difference between dry and wet soil.

**Ask Open-ended Questions About His Discoveries** - Remain involved as your child explores. Some questions to ask, "What did you find? What does the bug look like? How does it move?" Have your child describe what he sees, the shape and color of the leaves, the texture of the soil, and the movement of the grasses. The more your child observes, the more he learns.



### Touch, Lift, and Look Under Objects

**Examine objects from all sides** so your child can begin to understand that there may be creatures living under or in the object; and the importance of not disrupting their habitat.

### Guide Your Child To Draw Conclusions

**The best learning occurs** when your child comes to conclusions for himself. Ask questions such as, "Do you remember what color the leaves were last time we took this walk? What do you see now?"

The great outdoors provides opportunities for children to use their senses when exploring. These experiences help a child learn and share memories that bring cohesiveness to the family.

Source: retrieved from <http://families.naeyc.org/learning-and-development/music-math-more/explore-great-outdoors-your-child>.

## Child Guidance for Baby Continued from page 1

Use redirection to "teach." This means moving your baby away from a hazard, such as a lamp cord, and moving him to a safe place. You can substitute things for your baby. For example, find a drawer in your kitchen that is OK for your baby to empty.

It's important to remember that your baby can't control his behavior yet. If you spank him, he learns that it is OK to hit. It's your job to keep him out of danger, not to punish him for getting into it. If you can set limits, and at the same time provide loving care, you will help your baby grow up feeling safe and secure.

Source: "Child Guidance: Discipline and Safety," Just in Time Parenting, Month 5. [www.extension.org/parenting](http://www.extension.org/parenting).

## Test Your Knowledge!

- 1) T F Exploring the outdoors is an opportunity for children to use their senses, explore, and participate in fun learning activities.
- 2) T F Babies under 1 year are old enough to understand why they should stop doing something.
- 3) T F The transition from preschool to kindergarten can be a stressful time for both children and parents.