

# COLLECTIVELY INVESTING IN 3–5-YEAR-OLDS

to foster educational success

## KEY MOMENT

# 3

AFTER ENROLLMENT IN KINDERGARTEN

### INSTILLING AN ENTHUSIASM FOR SCHOOL

A smooth first transition from early childhood to kindergarten relies both on partnerships among the various sectors involved with children and their families and on addressing the needs of all. By investing in this issue collectively, we help make going to school fun and increase parental engagement—strong foundations for educational success! Five key moments over a 16-month period offer numerous opportunities to work together.

CHILDREN

PARENTS

FAMILIES

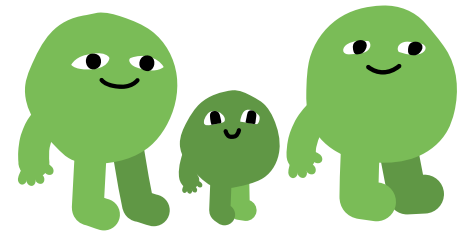
CHILDCARE CENTRES

SCHOOLS

LIBRARIES

COMMUNITY, SCHOOL, HEALTH, AND MUNICIPAL NETWORKS

**March to June...** It's done. The child is enrolled in kindergarten, and the school is expecting them. Now it's time for everyone to work toward instilling an eagerness to attend school. Gone is the notion of preparing children to check off a list of skills. Instead, it's all about supporting the transition from the daycare or the home to the school environment by seizing every opportunity to nurture the pleasure of learning.



## Instilling an enthusiasm for school is...

### CREATING, DEVELOPING, AND TAKING PART IN ACTIVITIES

- Activities can be **numerous, large and small, diverse, formal, or spontaneous**, but most importantly, they should be fun, give children confidence, teach them to persevere, and equip them to interact with others.
- Activities should focus on **harmonious overall development** rather than on acquiring specific competencies. This approach avoids labelling children as “ready” or “not ready” and is instead a flexible process that unfolds day-by-day to help children make a smooth transition to the school environment.

### PLAYING!

- Any **everyday** situation can be an opportunity to introduce children to the arts, sciences, literacy, mathematics, and so on.
- **No pressure.** There's no need to recite the alphabet or count to 100. All forms of exploration – sitting down, standing up, outdoors, indoors – will nourish a child's curiosity and help them gain confidence in their abilities.
- An old Chinese proverb goes, “don't pull up the shoots to make them grow.” It's the same with children. Instead, we must respect different children's needs, characteristics, and paces to cultivate the **joy of learning** through play. And try to stay out of the way.

### GUIDING THEM TOWARD AUTONOMY...

- Starting kindergarten presents children with challenges: an unfamiliar environment, new relationships, a different routine, etc. It is important to tackle these stimulating challenges **gradually** and on a daily basis.
- Try to see things from a **child's eyes**, in the present moment. For children, the transition to school is all about impressions and sensations: the school is beautiful, there are play structures, Sofiane is going to “my school”!
- It's an adjustment for **parents** too. Their landmarks are changing, they will have different responsibilities and interact with new service workers. As with children, a gradual, compassionate, integration will help transform these new realities into a stimulating adventure.

## · THE 5 KEY MOMENTS OF A SMOOTH FIRST TRANSITION TO SCHOOL ·



### Creating a positive first contact

JANUARY AND FEBRUARY

DURING ENROLLMENT IN KINDERGARTEN

### Working together

AUGUST TO DECEMBER

PRIOR TO ENROLLING IN KINDERGARTEN

### Instilling an enthusiasm for school

MARCH TO JUNE

AFTER ENROLLMENT IN KINDERGARTEN

### Valuing skillsets

JULY TO SEPTEMBER

AROUND THE START OF KINDERGARTEN

### Settling in

OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER

AFTER THE START OF KINDERGARTEN

## A smooth transition from early childhood to kindergarten:



- + Instilling a spirit of discovery and a gradual sense of belonging to the new school will help create lasting **educational motivation**.
- + Taking care to limit a certain “performance culture” (e.g., an expected “level” of development) will protect children and parents alike from **unnecessary stressors**.
- + Providing a welcome that is open to difference will nurture everyone’s **ability to adapt**.
- + Interactions between schools, parents, early childhood stakeholders, and service workers create a **reassuring** connection between past and new environments.



## Suggestion box

**Establish and maintain lines of communication** between parents, school, and community. The key is to keep things brief and regular!

**This is the time for educational and community networks** to up their activity game: storytelling, neighbourhood parties, parent-child games, information workshops, etc.

**Broaden the transition and welcome framework.** Invite children and parents to discover and explore their new environment (classrooms, gym, library, schoolyard) in informal and even fun contexts. Involve family members who already attend the school.

**In diverse communities,** use children’s cultural references as anchor points. E.g., the importance of extended family, language of origin, etc.

**Don’t forget about children who stay at home** – even though a large proportion attend childcare environments. The same goes for isolated families.

**Hint:** Gradual adjustments are best made in a climate of reciprocity between child, parents, and the school about to welcome them.

**Etc.!**

 [reseautreussitemontreal.ca](https://www.reseautreussitemontreal.ca) | **La première transition scolaire:** research, data sheets, resources, and videos.

<https://www.reseautreussitemontreal.ca/dossiers-thematiques/transitions-scolaires/la-premiere-transition-scolaire/>

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**Want your own caterpillar?!**

COLOURFUL SUMMARY POSTER

The 5 information sheets in the *Collectively investing in 3–5-year-olds to foster educational success* are based on the five key moments in a smooth first transition to school. The sheets are distributed over the course of 16 months and provide information specific to each key moment at the appropriate time of year. They are produced by Réseau réussite Montréal–RRM, which works to disseminate effective concepts, based on a consensus of Montréal stakeholders, related to the transition from early childhood to kindergarten.