

## Tips for Starting School

Whether your child is starting preschool or kindergarten, the following tips will help to make the transition easier.

- **Prepare your child for a new environment.** Visit the school and the child's new classroom before the first day and meet the teacher, if possible. Let your child play on the playground, visit the cafeteria, and see where the restrooms are located. Visiting beforehand will let your child know what to expect, and allow them time to talk to you about their concerns before school starts.
- **Adjust sleep schedules.** If your child will be getting up earlier than usual, start to make the adjustment a week or two before school starts.
- **Provide comfort.** Ask your child what would help make the separation easier. Perhaps a small stuffed toy or a family picture would help. Always say good-bye before you leave, even if your child cries. It may be tempting to sneak away, but doing this will make it harder for your child to trust you the next time you must leave them. Reassure your child that you will be back, and try to give a certain time for your return, such as after lunch or after naptime.
- **Read together.** Kindergarten teachers often tell parents that the best thing they can do to prepare their child for school is to read to them every day. Here are some suggestions for books dealing with separation and school. Share these books with your child and point out what will be the same in his or her classroom. (All titles are available at the San José Public Library.)

*The Kissing Hand/Un beso en mi mano by Audrey Penn*

*Spot Goes to School/ Spot va a la escuela by Eric Hill*

*First Day by Joan Rankin*

*I Love School by Philiemon Sturges*

*Anna Goes to School/Anna Đi Học by Katie Teague (bilingual English/Vietnamese)*