



Merri Health
Healthcare that moves with you

Preparing for kinder

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Acknowledgement of Country

In the spirit of reconciliation Merri Health acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community.

We pay our respect to their Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples watching this video.



Image: Merri Health
Reconciliation Action Plan artwork
Artist: Simone Thomson





What we'll cover tonight:

- The importance of kinder
- Fostering your child's independence
- Practical tips for preparing for kinder
- Your child's development



The importance of kinder

- In the early years, play is the main way that children learn.
- Play-based learning prepares children for the structured direct teaching that takes place at school.
- At kinder, your child will engage in a combination of:



Guided play and learning

Child-directed play and learning

Intentional teaching



The importance of kinder

- Your child's kinder teachers and educators follow the guidelines of the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF), which is similar to a school curriculum.
- Kinder teachers and educators are experts in early childhood education and helping children develop their skills in many areas of development.





Supporting your child's independence

Why it's important

- Kinder is about your child developing their identity outside of their family. It's an important rite of passage for children and helps them to develop their independence and confidence away from home.
- Helping your child to become more independent is all about empowering them and helping set them up for long-term success.
- The teacher-to-child ratio is very different at kinder compared to school. We can support children to be able to achieve things on their own by helping them practice being independent while we are still there to support them.

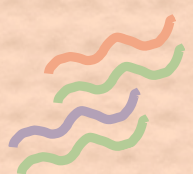


Supporting your child's independence

Social skills

- Organise play dates with other children who are attending the same kinder
- Role play different social scenarios with your child and their toys
- Practice turn-taking games at home
- Teach your child scripts to say when in social scenarios
- Talk through common challenges and how your child may manage them

Social scenarios to focus on:

- Asking if they can play with someone
 - When someone wants to play something differently to how we want to
 - When someone does something that we don't like
 - When someone doesn't want to play with us anymore
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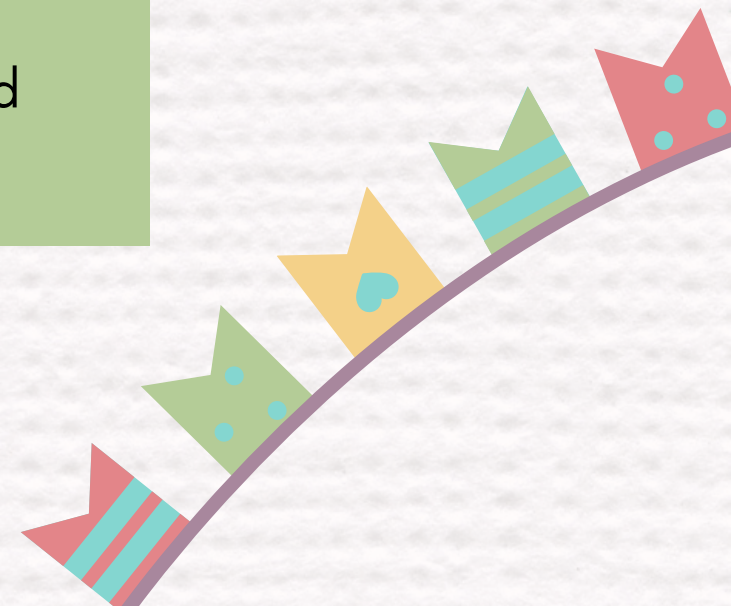


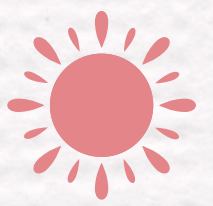




Supporting your child's independence

Self-care skills

- Practice opening and closing their lunch box, containers, water bottle, etc.
- Practice opening food packets, yogurts and anything you will regularly give your child in their lunch box
- Help them to zip their bag open and shut
- Practice putting their hat and jacket on and taking them off
- Show them how to put sunscreen on their face, neck and arms

Using the toilet

- Your child is still able to attend kinder if they are not toilet trained.
- If your child is not toilet trained, make sure they wear a Pull Up to kinder instead of a nappy to help with change times and to encourage them to practice sitting on the toilet.
- Don't worry if your child is still learning how to use the toilet. If they are wearing underwear at home, keep putting them in underwear for kinder but make sure you pack a change of clothes for them in case they have an accident.



Supporting your child's independence

Separating at drop-off

- Plan your drop-off routine with your child so they feel involved in what is going to happen.
- Remind your child of what is going to happen when you get to kinder.
- Try to keep your drop-off short and make it the same each day so your child knows what to expect.
- Your drop-off routine might look something like this: Put their bag away, hug and wave at the door, tell your child you will be back to pick them up later.
- Most children will start to feel better after you leave and will have a fun day at kinder! If your child becomes upset and their teacher cannot calm them, they will call you to come and pick them up.
- Talk openly with your child's teachers about how you are feeling about being away from your child so they can support you through this time.

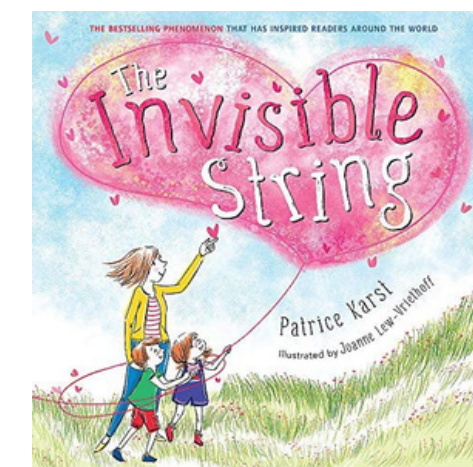
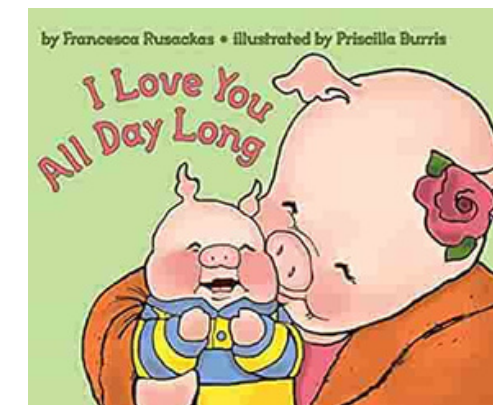


Practical tips to prepare for kinder

- Try to drive, ride or walk past the kinder to introduce your child to their new kinder and show them what it looks like.
- Talk about kinder in a positive way – children take their cues from us so they are less likely to be nervous if we are excited!
- Set up consistent morning and night-time routines at home to help your child be well-rested and prepared for their kinder day.
- Talk to your child about what your child will do at kinder. Reading books about kinder can help with this.

Books about starting kinder

- First Day by Margaret Wild
- I Love You All Day Long by Francesca Rusackas
- Maisy Goes to Preschool by Lucy Cousins
- Tom Goes to Kindergarten by Margaret Wild
- What to Expect at Preschool by Heidi Murkoff
- Victoria Bubbles and The Great Preschool Adventure by Lizzie Dingle
- The Night before Kindergarten by Natasha Wing
- Kindergarten, Here I Come! by David Steinberg
- I'm Ready for Preschool by Jedda Robaard
- Planet Kindergarten by Sue Schmitt
- The Invisible String by Patrice Karst





Videos about starting kinder

- Sesame Street: Murray's First Day at Preschool:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PwHLUwla2rQ> (This video is American so some things are different to Australian kinders, e.g. Murray calls kinder 'preschool')
- Playgroups, child care and preschool video:
<https://raisingchildren.net.au/toddlers/videos/playgroups-child-care-preschool>
- How play helps child development:
<https://raisingchildren.net.au/toddlers/videos/play-helps-development>



Your child's development

- It's important that if you have any concerns about your child's development that you talk with their teacher about this as soon as possible.
- You can inform them about your child's likes, dislikes, preferences and worries.
- The more they know about your child before they start, the more they will be able to support them.
- Your child's teacher may also recommend referrals to professionals such as allied health clinicians or a paediatrician.



Thank You!

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References & links

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