

<b>Describe your favorite teacher.</b>	<b>Explain why education is so important.</b>	<b>What three documents will you need for registration?</b>	<b>What is your plan if school dismisses early?</b>	<b>How do you plan to participate after school starts?</b>	<b>Discuss 2 important safety rules.</b>	<b>Tell what scares you most about starting school.</b>	<b>If you need help at school, whom will you ask?</b>	<b>Say your address and telephone number.</b>	<b>What are your parents' names?</b>	<b>When is your birthday?</b>	<b>Can you tie your shoes?</b>	 
<b>Move 2 spaces</b>	<b>Move 2 spaces</b>	<b>Move 3 spaces</b>	<b>Move 3 spaces</b>	<b>Move 2 spaces</b>	<b>Move 3 spaces</b>	<b>Move 2 spaces</b>	<b>Move 2 spaces</b>	<b>Move 4 spaces</b>	<b>Move 3 spaces</b>	<b>Move 3 spaces</b>	<b>Move 4 spaces</b>	 

Dear Parent,

Welcome to the adventure of learning in our public schools.

Getting your child ready for that first day of school can be a stressful and exciting experience. This brochure is designed to help you and your child have a positive “first day” experience. Read the tips and then play the game on the back of the brochure with your child.

If you have any questions, call your child’s school or the central office. Working as a team, we hope to give your child the very best possible education experience.

Sincerely,

The Members of the Tennessee Education Association

## Getting Ready

- To register your child, you will need a certified copy of the birth certificate (not the one you received in the hospital) immunization record and medical examination forms.
- To obtain a certified copy of the birth certificate, contact the Vital Records Department of the state where your child was born. Include: father’s name, mother’s maiden name, child’s birth-given name, county of birth and date of birth. Allow at least three weeks for delivery. Payment must be sent with your request. In Tennessee, the address is Vital Records, 421 5th Avenue North, First Floor, Central Services Building, Nashville, TN 37247-0450. The charge is \$7 (short form) and \$12 (long form). Phone requests will be processed faster and may be charged to a credit card (only) for an additional \$9. The direct numbers are: 615.741.0778, fax 615.726.2559 or Web site at [www.vitalchek.com](http://www.vitalchek.com). Additional fees may apply when ordering by fax or on the Internet.
- Have your physician or local health clinic complete the proper medical forms. Your child’s immunizations must be up-to-date. For Tennessee’s requirements, contact your local health department.

- Your attitude about school will influence your child’s frame of mind. If you are positive, your child probably will be too. Be realistic when you talk about school. Don’t pretend that it’s all fun and games. Share how you felt about your first days of school.
- Encourage your child to discuss his feelings about school. Do not pass off any doubts or fears he expresses. Try to answer all questions in a reassuring way. Don’t give your child the impression that he has a choice about going to school. Be calm, firm and positive if he balks.
- Talk with your child about the role of teachers. Let her know that teachers are real people who want to help students. Encourage your child to ask for assistance. Stress that parents and teachers are a team. Remember, next to you, a teacher will be the most important person in your child’s new life.
- Begin a routine before school starts. Establish a good sleeping pattern; ten to twelve hours is recommended for this age. Have your child perform certain tasks at home at certain times each day to help him adjust to a schedule.
- Help your child get accustomed to sitting still by having her listen to a record, draw or work puzzles.
- Don’t allow eating between meals. A child snacking may get hungry before lunchtime or before school is out.
- Since starting school represents such a big change, keep other changes to a minimum. A familiar routine at home will mean a lot to your child.
- Encourage your child to use different media at home: paper, pencils, crayons, scissors, modeling clay, paste, etc.
- Your child may be one of 22 students in a Tennessee kindergarten class. It is important that he be as self-reliant as possible, especially with personal needs.
  - ~ Make sure your child can manage her clothing, such as being able to tie her shoes, to put on and take off outer clothes, and to snap or zip pants.
  - ~ Your child needs to be at ease using a public restroom.
  - ~ Your child needs to be able to manage a cafeteria tray, to open a milk carton and to eat a sack lunch.

- ~ Your child needs to master personal hygiene skills including washing his hands, covering his mouth when he coughs and using a tissue after a sneeze.
- Be sure your child has memorized the following: her first and last name, her parents’ names, her address, her telephone number (including area code), her birthday (including the year) and her bus number.
- Talk with your child about the importance of caring for textbooks and school property.
- Work out a plan for your child in case school dismisses early due to weather or if your child gets sick. Discuss this plan with your child and practice using it.
- Practice the best route to the school or bus stop. If possible, visit the school. Check on orientation programs.
- Talk about and practice the basics of safety.
  - ~ Never talk to strangers; go directly home from school.
  - ~ Wait on the curb for the traffic light to change.
  - ~ Cross streets only at the crosswalk. Look left, right and then left again. Walk, don’t run.
  - ~ Watch for cars pulling in or out of driveways.
  - ~ Walk on the sidewalk whenever possible. Walk facing traffic where there are no sidewalks.
  - ~ Wait quietly for the school bus. Stay off the street and keep close to the bus stop while waiting.
  - ~ Always remain seated while the bus is moving. Sit facing the front with both feet on the floor. Keep head and arms inside. Stop, look and then cross the street only after the driver has signaled that it is safe.
- If your child will be home alone after school, be sure he knows how to answer the phone and how to react if someone knocks at the door. Have easily understood rules for a latch key child.

## When School Starts

- Start the day with a healthy breakfast. Get up in plenty of time for school. (Organizing school supplies and clothing the night before

- will help.) Remember, a cheerful “Have a good day” is more encouraging than a gruff “Be good.”
- Be sure clothing and shoes fit properly and are comfortable and practical. Remember, frilly dresses are not made for the play ground. Break in new shoes *before* school starts. Choose appropriate outdoor clothing and provide for possible changes in the weather. Label personal items.
- Walk your child to class on the first day. On the second, stop midway. On the next, let him walk in alone.
- If your child is especially apprehensive, put a family photo in her lunchbox or notebook.
- When sending money to school, put it in an envelope and write your child’s name and what the money is for on the outside.
- Arrive at school at the proper time — not too early before there is adequate supervision and, especially, not too late.
- If there will be a change in your child’s method of arrival or departure, send a note to the teacher.
- If you need to contact a teacher, call the school. You may be asked to leave a number since teachers often cannot leave their classrooms.
- Learn the names of all teachers who will be working with your child and school rules regarding clothing, money, supplies, etc. Know the school calendar.
- Proudly display your child’s classwork at home. Listen with interest. Encourage and ask questions. Be generous with sincere praise, enthusiasm and sympathy.
- If your child is having a problem at school, contact the teacher as soon as possible. Exercise judgment in discussing the problem with your child.
- Notify the teacher of any special fears your child may have any special medical conditions (allergies, bee sting sensitivity, disabilities, etc.) and any special family circumstances (such as when one parent is not to have custody).
- Keep your child at home if he shows definite signs of illness (fever, rash, severe cough or runny nose). When he returns, send a note explaining the absence. If your child develops a communicable



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EDUCATING OUR CHILDREN  
 ENGAGING OUR PARENTS  
 EMPOWERING OUR SCHOOLS



- disease such as chicken pox, alert the school. You will be contacted if your child becomes ill at school. Explain to your child that he should tell the teacher if he feels sick.
- In case of weather emergencies, listen to media reports for school closing information. It is important, especially if you are a working parent, to have a plan to pick up your child in case of weather emergencies.
  - After school starts, take an active part. Join your school's parent-teacher group. Attend scheduled programs. Keep communications open between the home and the school. Monitor the local school board, superintendent and fiscal body. Talk with your state legislators about improving education.

START

### Go to School

- 1) Cut out cards and tokens along broken line.
- 2) Stack cards in two decks by color.
- 3) Parents, draw from blue cards. Students, draw from white cards.
- 4) For each correct answer, move number of spaces indicated on card.
- 5) Continue drawing cards until a player makes it to school.

	<p><b>You covered your mouth when coughing</b></p> <p>Forward 2 spaces</p>		<p><b>Parent remembered to label lunchbox</b></p> <p>Forward 2 spaces</p>		
		<p><b>BONUS</b></p> <p>Forward 3 spaces</p>			
		<p><b>Oops, no breakfast</b></p> <p>Back 1 space</p>	<p><b>You didn't talk to strangers</b></p> <p>Forward 2 spaces</p>		

**READY,  
 SET,  
 GO...  
 TO SCHOOL**



A step-by-step guide to prepare your family for that big event, **the first day of school**