

Education

Getting Ready

As your child gets ready to begin school, you may have many questions about how his or her unique needs will be met and how you can help prepare him or her to be as happy and successful as possible.

How can I help prepare my child for school?

There are many experiences that you can provide for your child to help develop the many skills they will use in school. You can help prepare your child for school with the following activities:

- Read to your child. Include books about going to school.
- Talk with your child about what he or she will be doing in school and the other children he or she will meet.
- Talk about routines and practice new ones at home.
 - Read to your child before bed.
 - Go for a daily walk.
 - Go on a weekly trip to the library.
 - Prepare and pack healthy snacks together.
 - Gather supplies for an outing and have them ready at the door the night before.
 - Have a weekly family game night.
- Call your child's school and arrange for your child to visit.
 - You may have a specific reason for your visit. If your child uses a wheelchair, for example, consider moving throughout the school before the school year starts. This may help your child to feel more comfortable with the space before it becomes crowded.



For more information

- **Getting Ready for School: A Parent's Guide** suggests activities to help your child learn new skills. It is available on the Healthy Child Manitoba website at www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/edi/gettingreadyforschool.pdf
- **School Transition: Starting School on the Right Foot** provides information on creating a smooth transition to school. It is available on The Centre for Excellence for Early Childhood Development website at www.child-encyclopedia.com/pages/PDF/School_transitionANGmcP.pdf
- **Helping your child learn to read – A Parent's Guide** provides helpful tips to encourage young children to read and develop a love of reading. It is available on the Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning website at www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/parents/learn/read.html



Preparing children for school can go a long way in developing their comfort level and confidence.

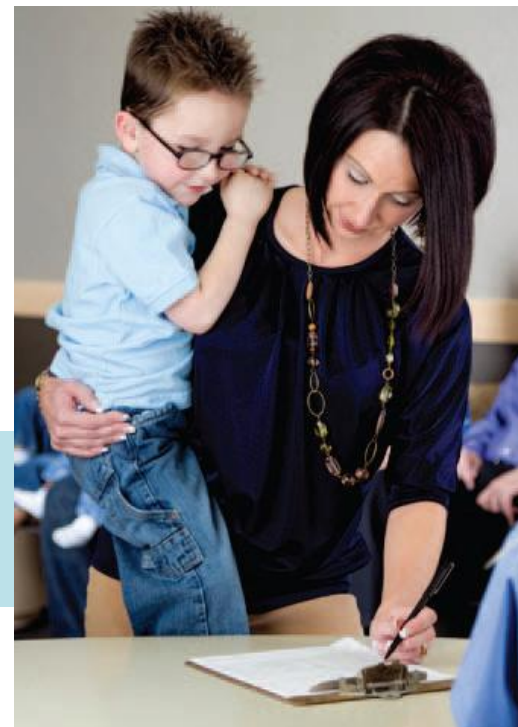
How do I register my child for school?

Schools usually begin registering children in early spring, if they are going to start school in September.

In Manitoba:

- All children have the right to attend school beginning in September of the year they turn six.
- Children are required to attend school when they reach compulsory school age, which is seven years of age.
- Most schools provide kindergarten. It is an optional year of schooling.

All children **may** go to school when they are six years old.
All children **must** go to school when they are seven years old.



If your child has exceptional needs, contact the principal of your neighbourhood school a year before your child is scheduled to register. This early contact will help the school begin planning to meet your child's needs. When you contact the principal, ask how you can be involved in the planning process. Schools often start this process with an intake meeting.

Exceptional needs include learning, communication, physical, sensory, or behaviour differences.



What is an intake meeting?

An intake meeting provides an opportunity for you and school staff to meet, share information, and begin planning your child's educational programming. The meeting may include you, the school principal, your child's classroom teacher, the school resource teacher, the school division student services administrator and others.

How can I prepare for an intake meeting?

At an intake meeting, school staff will want to get to know your child. They will want to learn about your child's strengths and favourite activities. They will also want to learn about your child's unique needs and challenges. You may be asked a lot of questions. You may be asked to provide the school with copies of reports, from doctors or others, to help make programming decisions for your child. You should feel free to ask the school staff any questions you have about the school and the school division.

Before attending an intake or planning meeting, ask yourself:

- What is my vision for my child's educational experience?
- What information about my child will be helpful for the school to know?
- What do I want to know about the school and the services available to my child?

For more information

- **Your school division** can provide information about your neighbourhood school and about services available in the school division. School division contact information is available on the Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning website at www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/schools/sb_contacts.html
- **Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning** has information about going to school in Manitoba, as well as links to school listings and school calendars on the Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning website at www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/schools/gts.html
- **Guidelines for Early Childhood Transition to School for Children with Special Needs** contains information on early childhood school entry. It includes an inventory of important information about your child that you can provide to the school. This document is available on the Healthy Child Manitoba website at www.gov.mb.ca/fs/childcare/pubs/transition_protocol.pdf
- **Your school division's student services administrator** is an educator who coordinates student services for a school division. They also provide consultation and support for special education, resource and general education teachers. Contact information for each school division's student services administrator is available on the Student Services Administrator's Association of Manitoba (SSAAM) website at www.ssaam.mb.ca

