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**Resource Centers and
Lending Libraries**
Prophetstown Elementary
Tampico Elementary
Wallace Education Center
Merrill School

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State Board of Education
Erie Dist. #1
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Morrison Dist. #6
East Coloma Dist. #12
Rock Falls Dist. #13
Riverdale Dist. #14
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Whiteside County

PARENTS AS TEACHERS

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Bring A Friend To The Park

Do you have a friend, neighbor, or relative who would like to be a part of Parents As Teachers? If so, this month would be a good time to introduce them to the program by bringing them to one of our park activities. Check the enclosed activity schedule for PARK IT WITH A BOOK dates, times, and locations in July.

Each year we have families leave our program because their youngest child is entering kindergarten or they have moved out of the area. This enables parent educators to enroll new families.

The only requirements for enrollment are that the family lives in a participating school district in Whiteside County and has a child birth to age five. We also will enroll a family who is expecting their first child within three months. You will find a Parents As Teachers program information page in the back of this newsletter. Please pass it on to someone who you think may be interested in enrolling.



Summer Chores Teach Children Life Skills and Responsibility

School is out for the summer, but learning can continue for your kids at home. Parents can teach children responsibility by assigning age-appropriate household chores.

"The home setting is the main classroom where your children learn from you," says Milly Kaiser, University of Illinois Extension family life educator. "Teaching life skills is one of the greatest gifts you can give your children. These skills will enable them to manage and maintain their own household when they are adults."

When assigning a task for children to perform, Kaiser reminds parents to select age-appropriate chores. Be sure the task is based on the child's physical and mental abilities. Assigning household chores at a young age can establish good habits and attitudes about work. Also, take the time to show and explain how to do the task; children need guidance and reminders. At first, helping your children complete a task will probably take some extra time; but in the long run, it will be worth the effort.

As you establish a chore routine this summer, you might even make a "chores chart" so that the children can check off tasks as they are completed.

Take time this summer to teach your children life skills. Although they may not appreciate these skills now, they will see the value in later life. It will be a struggle at times, but hang in there! Learning is going on.

Starting Kindergarten? Help Make It a Good Experience!



Starting kindergarten can be an anxious or an exciting experience for children. They enter an unfamiliar environment and spend time with strangers, but they also make new friends, meet new teachers, and learn new skills. Getting off to a good start is important! If kindergarten is a good experience, children tend to continue to do well in school. If kindergarten is a painful experience, children often have trouble in later years.

- ★ **Talk about the kindergarten program before the first day of school.**
Talk with your child about kindergarten before the big day. Find out what she thinks kindergarten will be like. Be prepared to answer her questions: What will the start of the day be like? What will the end of the day be like? Where will I eat lunch and play?
- ★ **Visit the kindergarten classroom in the spring.**
If possible, visit the classroom during the school term before she starts. Talk with the teacher and walk around inside the school. Visit the playground, the lunchroom, and the bathrooms. Seeing these places and people can help to ease some of the concerns your child might have.
- ★ **Let your child know it's OK to feel anxious.**
If your child is hesitant about starting kindergarten, let her know that you (or an older brother or sister or friend) felt the same way. Reassure her that she will get used to it very soon.
- ★ **Be sure your child is well rested and well fed.**
Kindergarten is usually more tiring for children than preschool was. Your child will be better able to meet the demands of kindergarten if he is well rested and has had a good breakfast. When children start school, regular bedtimes and mealtimes are more important than ever!
- ★ **Help your child develop a sense of responsibility.**
During the school years, you will want your child to begin taking responsibility for getting herself and her personal belongings to school on time. You will want her to complete her schoolwork and classroom jobs. You will also want her to let you know when she brings home important notes from school. As much as possible, let your child perform these important tasks for herself, starting in kindergarten. Doing so will help her feel capable and learn to be responsible.
- ★ **Take kindergarten seriously.**
Showing interest in your child's kindergarten experience lets him know that school is valuable. Ask him who he played with, what books he read, and what activities he took part in. Read the notes that come home from the teacher and school. Attend parent-teacher meetings and as many other school events as your schedule will allow. Your interest in your child's kindergarten experience sends an important message:
School is important!
- ★ **For related Web resources, see "Starting Kindergarten? Help Make It a Good Experience!" at <http://illinoisearlylearning.org/tips.htm>.**



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For more tip sheets on other topics, please go to <http://illinoisearlylearning.org>

¿Su hijo está por empezar el kinder? ¡Ayude a que sea una buena experiencia!



La experiencia de empezar a asistir al kindergarten puede ser ansiosa o emocionante para los niños. Entran a un ambiente desconocido y pasan el tiempo con personas desconocidas, pero también forman amistades nuevas, conocen a maestros nuevos y aprenden habilidades nuevas. ¡Es importante tener un buen comienzo! Si el kindergarten es una buena experiencia, los niños suelen continuar pasándolo bien en la escuela. Pero si el kindergarten es una experiencia dolorosa, frecuentemente tienen problemas en años posteriores.

★ **Hable acerca del kindergarten antes del primer día de la escuela.**

Platique con su hijo sobre el kindergarten antes de que llegue el gran día. Averigüe cómo piensa su hija que será la escuela. Esté preparado a responder a sus preguntas: ¿Cómo será el comienzo del día? ¿Cómo será el fin del día? ¿Dónde almorzaré y jugaré?

★ **Visite el aula del kindergarten en la primavera.**

Si es posible, visite el salón de clases durante el semestre previo a la fecha de entrada de su hija. Hable con el maestro y camine por los corredores de la escuela. Visite el jardín de recreo, la sala de almorzar y los baños. El ver estos lugares y estas personas puede ayudar a aliviar algunas de las preocupaciones que tenga su hijo.

★ **Comuníquese a su hijo que está bien sentirse ansioso.**

Si su hija se siente renuente acerca de comenzar el kindergarten, comuníquese que usted (o un hermano o hermana mayor o amigo) se sentía igual. Asegúrele que se acostumbrará a todo en poco tiempo.

★ **Asegure que su hijo descanse bien y esté bien alimentado.**

El kindergarten normalmente cansa más a los niños que el preescolar. Su hijo estará mejor preparado para estar a la altura de las demandas del kindergarten si ha descansado y desayunado bien. Cuando los niños comienzan a ir a la escuela, ¡es más importante que nunca acostarse y comer a horas regulares!

★ **Ayude a su hijo a desarrollar un sentido de responsabilidad.**

Durante los años de la escuela, usted querrá que su hija empiece a llevar la responsabilidad de llegar a la escuela a tiempo junto con sus pertenencias. Deseará que complete su tarea escolar y quehaceres del aula. También querrá que le dé las cartas importantes del maestro que lleve a casa. Tanto como sea posible, deje que su hijo lleve a cabo estas tareas importantes por sí mismo, empezando en el kindergarten. Al hacerlo, lo ayudará a sentirse capaz y a aprender sobre la responsabilidad.

★ **Tome el kindergarten en serio.**

Al mostrar interés en la experiencia del kinder de su hijo, usted le comunica que la educación es valiosa. Pregúntele con quién jugó, cuáles libros leyó y en qué actividades participó. Asista a las reuniones entre padres y maestros y a tantos eventos escolares como su horario permita. Su interés en la experiencia de su hijo en el kindergarten transmite un mensaje importante: **¡La escuela es importante!**

English Title: Starting Kindergarten? Help Make It a Good Experience



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Para más páginas de consejos acerca de otros temas, favor de visitar el: <http://illinoisearlylearning.org>

Your Child's First Day in Preschool



A child's first day at child care or preschool can be challenging—for both child and parents! Here are some tips for easing those first-day blues from parents who've lived through the experience.

- ★ **Make an appointment to visit the program with your child before she starts.**
 - Help your child list things she wants to find out about the program. For example, she might want to know the teachers' names, where the restroom is, and whether the class takes naps. Take the list along on your visit.
 - Arrange to meet staff members and children so your child will know a few people by name.
 - Ask what the staff does to help families prepare for a child's first days. Do teachers make home visits? Are family members welcome to stay in the classroom with the child during the first week or two? Can children bring comfort items (such as teddy bears or family photographs) to keep close at hand?
 - After the visit, talk with your child about what you found out. For example, did he find the restroom? Did he learn the teachers' names?

- ★ **Plan ahead for a smooth first day.**
 - Several days before your child begins the new program, start a "countdown" with him by marking the days off on a calendar. Invite him to help you collect his school supplies. Let him decide what to wear and what to take for lunch.
 - Make sure your child knows how she will get to and from the program—for example, in the car with you or another relative, in a car pool, or on a yellow bus.

- ★ **Create healthy habits for saying goodbye.**
 - Begin with simple departure rituals that are meaningful in your family. Your child may want you to hug her and remind her that she will be home again at the end of the day. Or she might want some other interaction with you—sharing a joke or deciding together which activity she will try first, for example.
 - If your child feels distressed when you leave, let him know that you understand that he might miss his family while he is at school, but you are sure those feelings will pass, and he will feel better after a time.
 - If you bring your child into the classroom, NEVER leave without letting her know you are going, even if you know that she will be upset when you go. Tell staff members that you must leave; they can comfort her and get her interested in an activity.

- ★ **For related Web resources, see "Your Child's First Day in Preschool" at <http://illinoisearlylearning.org/tips.htm>.**



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El primer día de preescolar de su hijo



El primer día de asistencia de un niño a una guardería o programa preescolar puede ser una experiencia desafiante, tanto para el niño como para sus padres. He aquí algunos consejos para aliviar las tensiones del primer día, ofrecidos por algunos padres que ya han vivido la experiencia.

- ★ Haga una cita para visitar el programa con su hijo antes del primer día.
 - Ayude a su hijo o hija a hacer una lista de lo que quiere averiguar sobre el programa. Por ejemplo, tal vez quisiera saber los nombres de los maestros, dónde se halla el baño y si se toman siestas durante la clase. Lleve la lista el día de la visita.
 - Haga arreglos para conocer a los miembros del personal y a los niños, para que su hijo conozca a algunas personas por sus nombres.
 - Pregunte al personal sobre lo que hace para ayudar a las familias a prepararse para los primeros días de asistencia de un niño. ¿Hacen los maestros visitas al hogar del niño? ¿Se invita a los familiares a quedarse en el aula con el niño durante las primeras semanas? ¿Se permite que el niño traiga objetos familiares como un osito o fotos de la familia y los mantenga cerca?
 - Después de la visita, converse con su hijo sobre lo que averiguaron. Por ejemplo: ¿encontró el baño? ¿Aprendió los nombres de los maestros?

- ★ Planifique de antemano para un primer día sin percances.
 - Varios días antes de que su hijo comience a asistir, empiece una cuenta regresiva y pídale que ponga marcas en los días de un calendario. Invítelo a ayudarlo a recoger las cosas que necesitará llevar a la escuela. Permita que el niño escoja la ropa que va a usar y la comida que llevará para el almuerzo.
 - Asegúrese que su hijo o hija sabe cómo llegará al programa y a casa; por ejemplo, en coche con usted u otro familiar, en el coche de unos amigos o en un autobús (camión o micro escolar) amarillo.

- ★ Forme hábitos sanos para despedirse.
 - Comience con ritos sencillos de despedida que sean significativos para su familia. Su hijo o hija tal vez quiera que usted la abraze o que le recuerde que ella volverá a casa nuevamente por la tarde. O puede que quiera otro tipo de interacción con usted, como por ejemplo contar un chiste o decidir juntos cuál actividad ella querrá probar primero.
 - Si su hijo se siente angustiado cuando usted se va, comuníquese que comprende que extrañará a su familia mientras está en la escuela, pero que usted está seguro de que tales sentimientos pasarán y que se sentirá mejor después de un rato.
 - Si usted acompaña a su hijo o hija hasta el aula, no se vaya NUNCA sin comunicarle que va a irse, aun si sabe que la niña se perturbará cuando usted se vaya. Informe al personal que tiene que irse; ellos podrán consolarla y despertar su interés en alguna actividad.

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July Parent and Child Activities
For All Parents As Teachers Families and Friends

PARK IT WITH A BOOK —

story and play time in the park for you and your children.

Families attending will receive a copy of the book of the week to take home.

***Please bring a blanket for story time.**

Date: Tuesday, July 11
Time: 10 a.m.
Place: Heritage Park - Erie

Date: Wednesday, July 12
Time: 10 a.m.
Place: Kilgour Park - Sterling

Date: Thursday, July 13
Time: 10 a.m.
Place: Kelly Park - Morrison

Date: Tuesday, July 18
Time: 10 a.m.
Place: Centennial Park - Rock Falls

Date: Wednesday, July 19
Time: 10 a.m.
Place: Jaycee Park - Prophetstown



***All activities will be cancelled if it is raining.**

WHITESIDE COUNTY PARENTS AS TEACHERS

What is Parents As Teachers?

PAT is a school-based parent education program which provides developmental information and support to families with children birth through age 5.

It is based on the knowledge that the first three years of a child's life are a critical time in the development of communication, social-emotional, motor, and cognitive skills.

Parents who understand each stage of their child's development and offer materials and experiences that are appropriate at each stage will be giving their child the best possible start in life.

Why does the Whiteside County Regional Superintendent of Schools offer this program?

Because the way a child grows and learns, beginning at birth, has an enormous impact on later success in school and life.

Parents who feel confident as their child's first and most important teacher will be giving their children the security and encouragement they need to become curious, eager learners and independent, capable persons.

Parents As Teachers is a voluntary program available without charge to Whiteside County families with children birth to age 5.

Services Offered:

- Personalized home visits by a certified parent educator specially trained in child development.
- Group meetings and playgroups where you can share parenting experiences and gain new insights.
- Information and guidance, beginning even before your baby is born.
- Lending libraries where parents may borrow toys and books for use at home with their child.
- Periodic screening of children to follow growth and development.
- A monthly newsletter.

For more information about Parents As Teachers, contact Pat Rhodes at 815/625-1495.

Sterling Municipal Symphony Band

Concert in the Park
each Wednesday evening
7:30 p.m.

beginning June 7

Grandon Civic Center
across from the Sterling Post Office

Bring the family and a blanket and
enjoy the glorious music.

FREE admission



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