



Yakima Covenant Christian Preschool

Is Your Family Ready for Preschool?

Sending our little ones off to preschool is a big step! We need to prepare our children for this new experience. We also need to prepare ourselves, as parents, for this transition. Sometimes, we are not ready for the amount of stress that comes from kissing our babies good-bye. Here are some thoughts to take into consideration as you decide whether or not your family is ready for preschool.

For You, As a Parent

How was YOUR first school experience?

Your attitude towards school sets the tone for your child. If you had a positive experience, talk about this with your child. If you remember a negative experience, think about how you can set your child up to have a different one. Keeping a positive outlook and attitude will help everyone settle into a comfortable preschool routine.

Are you ready to let your child go to school, even if he/she cries when you leave?

Sometimes, transitioning into preschool causes tears. We are prepared for this, and want to help your child. The best way to set your child up for success is to prepare a smooth routine for morning drop-offs, and stick to it. This will mean trusting the teachers to comfort your little one if tears start to fall when you go. If your child senses that you are hesitant to leave, he/she will pick up on your feelings, and wonder why. Although it may be the hardest thing you've ever had to do, the best way to handle this is to reaffirm that your child will have a good day, and to leave after you've said good-bye.

Will you be open and willing to listen to the teachers' suggestions, and put them into practice to establish a good drop-off routine?

As parents, it's hard to believe that someone can know what is good for our children when they've really just met them. However, as teachers, we base our observations and suggestions on our years of past experience with helping children transition into preschool. Your child's teachers may be able to help establish guidelines for everyone (child, parents, teachers) that will help drop-off go smoothly. We are always willing to adapt and adjust, and we need this same flexibility and commitment from parents, too.

For Your Child, the New Preschooler

The following basic questions will help you determine if your little one is ready to start preschool. If you answer “No” to most of the questions, it may be a good idea to wait a year before enrolling your little one. There is no magic right time to begin preschool, and each child is different.

- Can your child state his/her full name?
- Is your child able to dress him/herself with minimal assistance?
- Will your child listen to and follow 2-step directions?
- Does your child listen attentively to an age-appropriate story?
- Is your child able to communicate regarding his/her needs?
- Is your child fully potty trained? (This means knowing when he/she needs to go, going, and cleaning up after him/herself without assistance.)

What to Do Between Now and the First Day of Preschool

Preparing your family for your child's first day of preschool can begin now! This way, the transition will not feel rushed, sudden or out of control.

1. PRAY! Begin now praying for your little one, the other children and the teachers.
2. Establish a good morning routine. Try to leave ample time so that you and your little one do not feel rushed. Create a picture schedule, and post it so that your child will know what he/she needs to do to help get ready.
3. Have your child go to bed early. Starting school is stressful, and getting enough sleep is a key component to handling this well.
4. Encourage your child to play outside as much as possible.
5. Read, read, read to your little one every day! Label items around the house. Go to story time at the library.
6. Converse **with** your child as much as possible. This will help develop vocabulary.
7. Teach your child songs, poems and nursery rhymes. This helps to develop several important pre-literacy skills, such as the ability to rhyme and play with language.
8. Play games. Board games, counting games...these all develop important skills such as taking turns, number recognition, and working well with others.
9. Encourage your child to create and color! Children thrive when they are able to craft. Allow your child to use crayons, glue and child-safe scissors as much as possible. This develops fine motor skills that are essential for writing development.

We look forward to working with you as your family embarks on this amazing adventure called “preschool”! Please come to us with your questions and concerns, so that together we can provide your child a “wonder-full” year.