

Is your child starting school soon?

Here are some tips to get ready.

LEARN to play PLAY to learn

PLAY FOR ALL
AUSTRALIA



EarlyEd

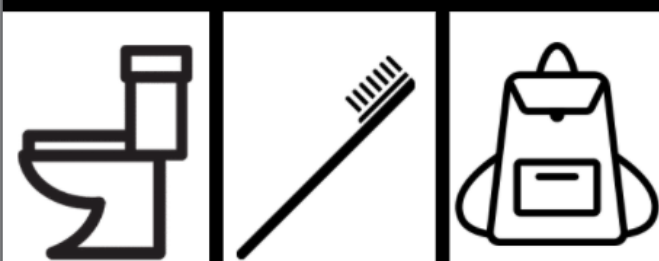
Together supporting all children... Starting early!



Learn to Play - Play to Learn gives you low cost / no cost inclusive ideas to do at home or in your neighbourhood. These ideas help children to be ready for school. Being able to look after themselves is a readiness skill that really makes a difference. Think about what a child needs to know how to do – zip up a bag, know which is their bag, open a lunch box. We can't take for granted that a child will work out how to do these things, so practice before they start.

Getting ready in the morning.

Draw Pictures of the Routine



Help your child get ready for school.

Make it easier for your child to have a smooth start to the day.

Draw the morning routine and create visual plan for your child to follow.

Perhaps you can “play schools” and set up a pretend classroom. Play and act out the routines of getting dressed, going to school and things you might do.

Let children practice putting on and wearing their school clothes.

School clothes can feel strange at first. They need to:

- get used to the feel of different shirts, shorts, dresses and shoes
- learn how to move, run, sit and play in them.

It is important for a child to manage their own clothes. Imagine how hard it would be for a teacher to be doing this for a whole class.

Learning to manage things like zips and shoes and finding your jacket helps a child feel independent.

School clothes can feel strange.



HELP YOUR CHILD – LEARN TO PLAY AND PLAY TO LEARN

Developed by teachers and therapists of EarlyEd in partnership with Play for All Australia and families who have a child with a disability.



Learn to Play _ Play to Learn is funded through Start Strong Pathways, NSW Department of Education

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ARBN: 648 016 531 ABN: 42 096 307 200 CFN: 10570 Early Education (EarlyEd) Inc.

For more information go to www.earlyed.com.au/startstrongplay/

Packing a school bag is not so easy.



Zipping up things is hard to learn at the best of times. School bags are pretty hard especially when they are hanging on a hook. Give your child some verbal steps to say to themselves when doing up the bag.

- Push all your belongings inside.
- Hold the side down.
- Start slowly.
- Pull the zip up and over.

Try experimenting to see if your child finds it easier to zip it up with it hanging up on the hook or taking it off and sitting it on the ground.

Even hanging a bag on a hook is tricky.

Using lunch boxes and managing all the things inside will help lunch times go smoothly. It might help to try different boxes to see which one suits your child or that they like best.

Organise to practice using a lunch box regularly to help make lunch an easy, stress-free everyday school routine. Practice opening it, balancing it on your lap, opening packets, yogurt containers, snack bars, bananas, all the things that children will eat sitting next to their friends...

All of these tasks require fine motor skills, motor planning, coordination and strength!

Manage a lunch box



How will I find my bag?
They all look the same.



Finding your own belongings is an important skill to learn before school starts. Recognising your name is a good start but only if someone has labelled everything!

A child needs to find their bag from a distance so help your child select something big and bold (that they like) to attach to it.

It helps if you choose something meaningful and unique to them. Maybe make something special together.

They will probably still need to practice finding their bag.

Think of other ways you can help reduce the stresses of losing things.

Help your child get used to carrying a backpack. Are they struggling to get the backpack on or off, leaning too much forward while walking or are they appear in discomfort while carrying them?

Let's first check if they are putting the backpack on right.

If yes, you may need to put less stuff in the bag to start with!

Did you know that backpacks should weight only about 10 % to 20% of your body weight?

Be smart when you pack the bag. Use all the pockets to distribute the load and put the heaviest item close to your back. Practise using both the shoulder straps.

Practice wearing your backpack

