

Growing Through Transitions

A Parent & Child Guide for Starting the School Year Together



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Mindful Living Resources™

A free parent-child guide to help families grow
through the transition back to school.



Welcome Parents

Growing Through Transitions

Starting a new school year can bring many different feelings.

Children might feel excited about meeting a new teacher, seeing friends, or learning something new.

They might also feel nervous, unsure, or even a little sad that summer is coming to an end.

Parents can have big feelings during transitions, too.

The good news is that children don't need to feel completely confident before school begins.

Many children build confidence because they begin.

Together, a teacher and a therapist created this guide to help families prepare for the transition back to school.

As you move through these pages, you'll find simple activities, conversation starters, and practical ideas to help make this transition feel a little more connected—and a little less overwhelming.

There's no perfect way to prepare.

Just one small step at a time.

Reflection

Transitions don't ask us to be perfect.

They invite us to grow.

Every Child Experiences Transitions Differently

Starting a new school year doesn't look the same for every child.

Some children run into the classroom without looking back.

Others pause at the door.

Some talk excitedly for weeks beforehand.

Others become quieter than usual.

Some children may seem more emotional, more tired, or even a little more irritable in the days leading up to school.

All of these can be normal ways of responding to change.

The goal isn't to remove every uncomfortable feeling.

It's to help children move through those feelings with support, connection, and practice.

Reflection

Every child needs support in different ways.

There's no single "right" way to begin.

A Note from a Teacher's Heart

The first few days of school are filled with excitement, curiosity, and a little uncertainty—for children, families, and teachers alike.

As teachers, we are learning so much all at once. We are learning names, noticing personalities, discovering each child's strengths, and gently supporting them as they adjust to a new classroom, new routines, and new relationships.

Every child settles in at their own pace. Some children walk through the classroom door with confidence. Others may hang back, watch quietly, or need a little extra reassurance. Every response is okay.

One of the greatest gifts you can give your child's teacher is a window into who your child is beyond the classroom. When we understand what helps your child feel safe, calm, encouraged, and ready to learn, we can build a stronger connection from the very beginning.

Please know that we are not expecting perfection. We know there may be tears, big feelings, and moments of uncertainty as everyone adjusts to a new school year.

Our goal is simple: to help your child feel seen, valued, safe, and excited to learn.

Thank you for trusting us with one of the most important people in your life. We look forward to partnering with you to help your child grow, learn, and thrive this school year.

With care,

Christie Reid



Now It's Time to Explore Together

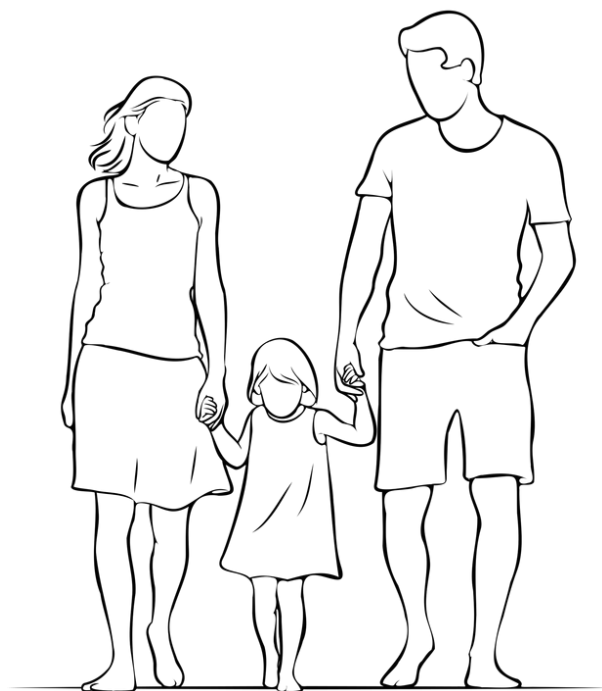
You've spent a few moments preparing for this new beginning.

Now it's time to invite your child to join you.

The rest of this guide is designed for the two of you to explore together through stories, conversations, and simple activities.

There isn't a perfect way to do these pages.

Enjoy the conversation, stay curious, and remember—growth often begins with one small step.



About Me

Let's Get Ready Together

Before a new school year begins, it can help to think about what makes you...you! There are no right or wrong answers.

Let's get to know each other a little better.

My name

I am excited about...

One thing I'm wondering about is...

Something that helps me feel brave is...

When I have a hard day, it helps when...

One thing I'm really good at is...

Parent Note

One strength I already notice in my child is...



ABOUT ME



A page to help my teacher get to know me!

Parents and children: Fill this out together
and colour it in! 

My Name: _____

What should my teacher
call me? _____

My Age: _____

Today's Date: _____ 

DRAW A PICTURE OF YOURSELF!

I am
unique!
I am
me!



MY FAVOURITE THINGS



Favourite colour: _____



Favourite movie or show: _____



Favourite food: _____



Favourite book: _____



Favourite toy, game
or activity: _____



Favourite animal: _____



MY STRENGTHS

I'm really good at... 



Being kind



Helping others



Drawing



Building



Reading



Sports



Making people laugh



Solving problems



Other: _____



I NEED A LITTLE EXTRA HELP WITH...



Starting my work



Making friends



Listening



Waiting my turn



Big feelings



Transitions



Asking for help



Trying new things



Staying focused



Other: _____



WHEN I'M FEELING UPSET...

The best way to help me is:



Give me a quiet minute



Talk with me



Give me a hug
(if appropriate)



Take some deep
breaths with me



Let me draw or colour



Go for a short walk



Other: _____





ABOUT ME



A page to help my teacher get to know me!

Parents and children: Fill this out together
and colour it in!



HOW I LEARN BEST

- ☐ Watching someone show me
- ☐ Listening
- ☐ Trying it myself
- ☐ Working with a friend
- ☐ One step at a time
- ☐ Movement breaks help me
- ☐ Pictures help me understand
- ☐ Other: _____



SOMETHING I WANT MY TEACHER TO KNOW



THIS YEAR I HOPE TO...



I WILL FEEL PROUD OF MYSELF WHEN...



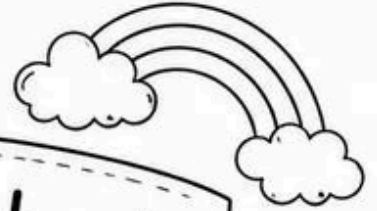
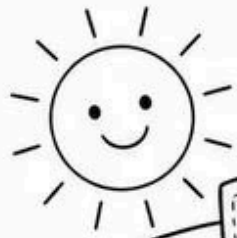
A LITTLE ABOUT ME...

Draw a picture of yourself or something you love!



Every child is unique. This page helps us get to know each other so
we can have a wonderful year together. There are no right or wrong answers—just be yourself!





A Letter to My Teacher

Dear Teacher,

Thank you for taking the time to get to know me.

This page was completed together with my family to help you understand what helps me learn, feel safe, and be successful at school.

Every child comes into your classroom with their own story, strengths, challenges, and dreams.

I hope this gives you a little window into mine.

Thank you for seeing me—not just as a student, but as a whole person.

With gratitude,

(Your Signature)



The Last Day Before School

A Tiny Reflection Tale

Finn the Fox woke up and lingered in bed. This morning felt a little different.

A knock came at his door.

He sighed and buried his head under the covers.

"Finnster?" called a familiar voice.

His bedroom door creaked open.

His mom peeked inside. "Are you awake?"

Finn pulled the covers down from his face.

"Yes."

"Breakfast is ready, sweetie," she said with a smile. "I made your favorite... blueberry pancakes."

Finn wrinkled his nose and smiled.

The smell of warm buttermilk filled his room.

The young fox tossed the covers aside, hopped out of bed, and hurried to the kitchen.



The Last Day Before School

After finishing the last bite of his breakfast, his mom finally asked, "Are you worried about school tomorrow?"

Finn swallowed his food and shrugged, letting out a long breath.

"No... not really," he said. "I'm excited to see my friends."

He paused.

His mom quietly sipped her coffee, giving him time to think.

"And," Finn continued, "I wonder if my teacher will be nice."

He looked down at his plate.

"I'm sad summer is ending."

His mom smiled gently.

"Yeah," she said. "I'll miss seeing you all day."

Finn scrunched up his nose, reached across the table, and took her paw.

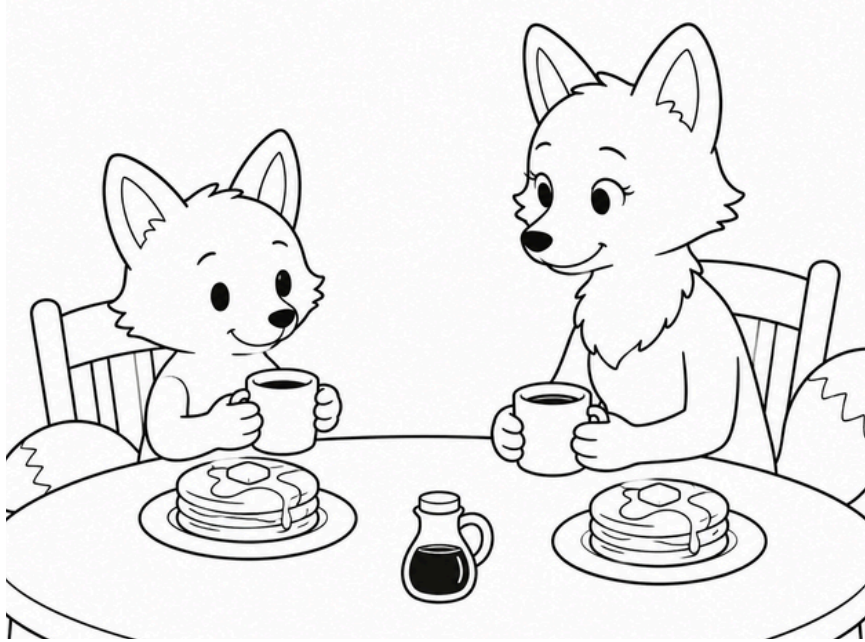
"I'll be home after school," he said with a smile. "And I'll tell you all about my day, Mom."

"I would love that, Finnster."

She chuckled, her eyes shining just a little.

"More than you know."

Let's Talk About Finn



1. What was Finn excited about?
2. What was Finn wondering about?
3. Finn felt excited and a little sad at the same time.

Have you ever had more than one feeling at once?

☐ Yes ☐ A little ☐ Not yet

Share your thoughts with your parent.

4. What do you think helped Finn talk about his feelings?
5. If you could tell one kind thing to Finn before his first day of school, what would you say?

Practice Together

Let's practice before the first day of school.

Practicing ahead of time can help new situations feel a little more familiar. Choose one or two cards to explore together today. You don't need to finish them all at once.

Some children want to practice meeting a teacher. Others want to practice saying goodbye, making friends, or asking for help.

Start with the situations that matter most to your child right now. There isn't one perfect way to practice.

Every small practice is one more step toward feeling ready.

 *the guide inside* ♥

HOW TO USE YOUR SOCIAL STORIES CARDS

FOR PARENTS & GUARDIANS

These cards are designed to help children learn and practice important social skills one small step at a time.

 **WHY THEY HELP**

Social stories help children understand what is expected, how it feels, and what they can do.

Practicing together builds confidence, connection, and kindness.



PRINT, CUT & GLUE IN 5 EASY STEPS

1
PRINT



Print the pages on regular 8.5 x 11" paper. Use colour printing for the best results!

2
CUT



Carefully cut along the dotted lines on each card.

3
GLUE



Apply glue or a glue stick to the back of each card.

4
ATTACH**5**
READY TO USE!

HELPFUL TIPS

**MAKE THEM LAST**

Place cards in sheet protectors or laminate them for extra durability.

**TALK ABOUT IT**

Read each card together. Talk about what it looks like, feels like, and how to practice.

**PRACTICE OFTEN**

Use real-life moments throughout the day to practice the skill together.

**CELEBRATE**

Celebrate every effort, not just perfection. Every small step counts!

♥ You know your child best. Trust your heart and enjoy this time together. ♥

1

MAKING FRIENDS



"Friendships grow
one small hello at a time."



2

LISTENING



"When I listen,
I show I care."



3

TRANSITIONS



"I can move from one
thing to the next."



4

CLEANING UP



"I take care of
my space and things."



5

TAKING TURNS
BEING THE LEADER

"Everyone gets a turn
and we all have a voice."



6

TAKING TURNS



"I wait, I share,
and we all have fun."



7

USING KIND WORDS



"Kind words build up
myself and others."



8

BIG FEELINGS



"All feelings are okay,
I can handle them."



9

SOLVING PROBLEMS
WITH FRIENDS

"We can talk, think,
and find a solution together."



10

MAKING MISTAKES



"Mistakes help me learn
and grow stronger."



1 MAKING FRIENDS

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE

- Smiling
- Saying hello
- Asking, "Can I play?"
- Looking at the other person
- Taking turns talking



WHAT IT FEELS LIKE

- Excited
- Curious
- Shy
- Nervous
- Happy after connecting



PRACTICE TOGETHER

Stand at opposite ends of the room. Pretend you're meeting for the first time. Practice three different greetings:

- Wave
- Smile
- "Can I play with you?"

2 LISTENING

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE

- Looking at the speaker
- Ears are listening
- Body is calm and still
- Waiting your turn
- Thinking about what they are saying



WHAT IT FEELS LIKE

- Focused
- Patient
- Respectful
- Calm
- Important



PRACTICE TOGETHER

Play "Mirror Listening". Take turns being the speaker and listener. The listener looks, listens, and repeats one thing they heard.

3 TRANSITIONS

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE

- Finishing one thing
- Hearing what comes next
- Gathering what I need
- Moving calmly
- Starting the next activity



WHAT IT FEELS LIKE

- Ready
- Unsure
- Nervous
- Nervous
- Proud



PRACTICE TOGETHER

Use "First, Then" cards. Practice finishing an activity (First), then choosing a new one (Then).

4 CLEANING UP

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE

- Picking up items
- Putting things where they belong
- Working safely
- Helping others
- Space looks tidy



WHAT IT FEELS LIKE

- Responsible
- Helpful
- Proud
- Accomplished
- Calm



PRACTICE TOGETHER

Set a timer for 5 minutes. See how much you can clean up together as a team!

5 TAKING TURNS BEING THE LEADER

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE

- Letting others go first
- Sharing ideas
- Taking turns leading
- Listening to the team
- Everyone gets a say



WHAT IT FEELS LIKE

- Fair
- Included
- Confident
- Proud
- Happy



PRACTICE TOGETHER

Play a game where everyone gets a turn to be the leader. Cheer for each other!

6 TAKING TURNS

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE

- Waiting patiently
- Watching others
- Taking my turn
- Sharing and trading
- Using a timer if needed



WHAT IT FEELS LIKE

- Patient
- Excited
- Frustrated (sometimes)
- Calm
- Proud when I wait



PRACTICE TOGETHER

Use a timer or count to 10 while waiting for your turn. Take deep breaths and cheer when it's someone else's turn!

7 USING KIND WORDS

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE

- Speaking gently
- Using respectful words
- Complimenting others
- Saying "please" and "thank you"
- Encouraging friends



WHAT IT FEELS LIKE

- Kind
- Happy
- Connected
- Proud
- Appreciated



PRACTICE TOGETHER

Create a "Kind Words Jar". Write kind words on slips of paper and share one with each other every day.

8 BIG FEELINGS

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE

- Face feels hot or tight
- Heart beating fast
- Wanting to cry or yell
- Hard to think clearly
- Body feels wiggly or tense



WHAT IT FEELS LIKE

- Sad
- Angry
- Worried
- Overwhelmed
- Scared



PRACTICE TOGETHER

Practice a calm-down tool together: take 3 deep breaths, squeeze a pillow, or count to 10.

9 SOLVING PROBLEMS WITH FRIENDS

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE

- Talking calmly
- Listening to ideas
- Thinking of solutions
- Choosing what works
- Trying it together



WHAT IT FEELS LIKE

- Hopeful
- Calm
- Relieved
- Calm
- Confident



PRACTICE TOGETHER

Think of a small problem (like what to play). Brainstorm 2-3 solutions and choose one to try!

10 MAKING MISTAKES

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE

- Trying my best
- Making a mistake
- Learning from it
- Asking for help
- Trying again



WHAT IT FEELS LIKE

- Disappointed (sometimes)
- Okay
- Proud when I try again
- Determined



PRACTICE TOGETHER

Share a mistake you made and what you learned. Then say together, "I can try again!"

Try It Together

Now, go back and choose one situation from the cards and pretend it's happening.

Take turns practicing together.

Ideas to try:

- Walking into the classroom.
- Meeting the teacher.
- Saying goodbye.
- Asking a question.
- Taking a deep breath if you feel nervous.

There isn't one right way to practice.

Every time you practice, you're helping your brain become a little more familiar with what's ahead.

As you practice, notice together....

- ☐ Which situations felt easiest?
- ☐ Which situations felt a little harder?
- ☐ Which ones are starting to feel easier after practicing?
- ☐ Is there one situation you'd like to practice again tomorrow?

My Transition Plan

One small step at a time.

Now it's your turn.

Think about everything you've talked about and practiced together.

Choose a few simple ideas that will help you feel ready for your first week of school.

This year I will be in: _____

My teacher: _____

One thing I'm looking forward to is...

One small step I can take if I feel nervous is...

One person I can talk to if I need help is...

Anything else on my mind...?

Parent Note

One way I can support my child this week is...

First Week Encouragement

Every beginning gets a little easier.

The first week of school doesn't have to be perfect.

Some days will feel exciting.

Some days may feel challenging.

Both are completely okay.

Every smile... Every question... Every goodbye... Every brave step...
helps build confidence.

Keep talking.

Keep practicing.

Keep noticing the small moments of growth.

Because confidence often grows after we begin.

Reflection

Growth doesn't always happen all at once.

Sometimes it grows one small step at a time.

You're Ready

Thank you for spending this time together.

Preparing for a new school year isn't about making every worry disappear.

It's about making room for excitement, questions, courage, and connection.

Whether your first day feels easy or difficult...

whether there are smiles, tears, or a little of both...

remember that every new beginning is an opportunity to grow.

We hope this guide helped you start the school year together—with a little more confidence, a little more understanding, and one small step at a time.

Have a wonderful school year!

Christie & Michael



Continue the Journey

We hope this guide helped your family feel a little more prepared for the school year ahead.

If you'd like more resources, encouragement, and practical ideas throughout the year, we'd love to stay connected.

 **Christie Reid**

The Guide Inside™

Helping families reconnect with their inner guidance.

- [Website](#)
- [Instagram](#)

Lifting Her Up™

A mindful space for women to breathe, bloom, and belong. Monthly moments to reset, reconnect & reflect.

- [Instagram](#)

 **Michael Kiel, MA, LPC**

Mindful Living Resources™

Helping kids (and the grown-ups who love them) move through big feelings with mindfulness and ACT.

- [Website](#)
- [Instagram](#)
- [Newsletter](#)

Thank you for allowing us to be a small part of your family's journey.