

# COLLECTIVELY INVESTING IN 3–5-YEAR-OLDS

to foster educational success

## KEY MOMENT

# 4

AROUND THE START OF KINDERGARTEN

## VALUING SKILLSETS

A smooth first transition from early childhood to kindergarten relies both on partnerships among the various sectors involved with children and their families and on addressing the needs of all. By investing in this issue collectively, we help make going to school fun and increase parental engagement—strong foundations for educational success! Five key moments over a 16-month period offer numerous opportunities to work together.

CHILDREN

PARENTS

FAMILIES

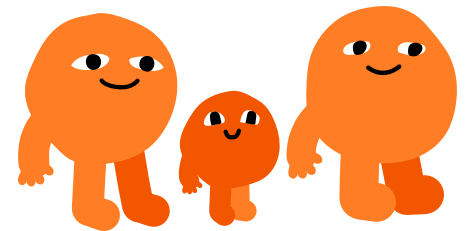
CHILDCARE CENTRES

SCHOOLS

LIBRARIES

COMMUNITY, SCHOOL, HEALTH, AND MUNICIPAL NETWORKS

**July to September...** for the child, their family, and their school, several important steps have already been taken. The child is enrolled in kindergarten, so the prospect of attending school is now real for them. But there's a whole summer ahead before they start kindergarten. Childcare centres will be saying their goodbyes to babies who have grown up, and the child, their parents, and social circle are all preparing for the big day. At the end of the summer, schools are bubbling with the energy of the back-to-school period.



## Valuing skillsets is...

### RECOGNIZING THAT PARENTS PLAY A CENTRAL AND ACTIVE ROLE IN THIS ADVENTURE.

- They are the child's **first educator**.
- They are the child's **first guide** in the transition to kindergarten.
- They are important **people to talk to** and learn valuable information about the child's past and needs.

### SHOWING OPENNESS AND GOODWILL TOWARD FAMILY ENVIRONMENTS.

- Their first role is to meet the **child's needs**.
- Their questions and concerns are **legitimate**; they merit careful attention.
- Parental skills are based on **different life experiences**; taking these into account will shed light on the child's needs.
- Making space for families in kindergarten integration activities recognizes their **essential contributions** to a smooth transition.
- The relationships with school experienced by the various adults in the child's life will vary, but everyone wants the **best for the child**.

### REASSURING THE CHILD IN THEIR ABILITY TO ENJOY FACING NEW CHALLENGES.

- Expressing one's **emotions** about entering kindergarten is an integral part of the process, and encouraging this is a positive thing—whether it is excitement or apprehension...

## · THE 5 KEY MOMENTS OF A SMOOTH FIRST TRANSITION TO SCHOOL ·



### Creating a positive first contact

JANUARY AND FEBRUARY

DURING ENROLLMENT IN KINDERGARTEN

### Working together

AUGUST TO DECEMBER

PRIOR TO ENROLLING IN KINDERGARTEN

### Instilling an enthusiasm for school

MARCH TO JUNE

AFTER ENROLLMENT IN KINDERGARTEN

### Valuing skillsets

JULY TO SEPTEMBER

AROUND THE START OF KINDERGARTEN

### Settling in

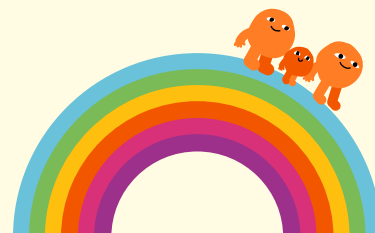
OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER

AFTER THE START OF KINDERGARTEN

## A smooth transition from early childhood to kindergarten:

a  
+  
for everyone

- + Making room for parents right from the start is a cornerstone of **parent-school relations**.
- + A relationship of trust between parent and school creates an **emotional environment conducive to adaptation** and a healthy model of relationships among people.
- + Recognizing everyone's skills, backgrounds, and emotions builds a sense of **safety and wellbeing** toward the new environment of the school.
- + Initial parental **engagement** has every chance of continuing into the child's future schooling, which constitutes a determinant of educational success.



## Suggestion box

**Ensure that information** about the start of kindergarten is kept up to date in real time (on the school's website, with community partners, etc.)

**Speak positively about kindergarten**, using vocabulary related to the child's new world: your class, your teacher, the bell, recess, daycare services, etc.

**Drive by or take a walk** to the school with the child. Explore the schoolyard.

**Invite parents into the classroom**, with the child on the first day of kindergarten.

**Etc.!**

**Keep the documentation** given to parents upon enrollment (how the school operates, school entry activities, list of school supplies, etc.) available online, at the school, and with community partners, etc.

**Use school-themed books** to engage the child in discussion.

**Post / distribute** the list of community partners that offer transition activities.

 [reseauressitemontreal.ca](https://reseauressitemontreal.ca) | *La première transition scolaire*: research, data sheets, resources, and videos.

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Want your own caterpillar?!

COLOURFUL SUMMARY POSTER

The 5 information sheets in the *Collectively investing in 3–5-year-olds to foster educational success* are based on the five key moments in a smooth first transition to school. The sheets are distributed over the course of 16 months and provide information specific to each key moment at the appropriate time of year. They are produced by Réseau réussite Montréal–RRM, which works to disseminate effective concepts, based on a consensus of Montréal stakeholders, related to the transition from early childhood to kindergarten.