

LEARNING TO GROW

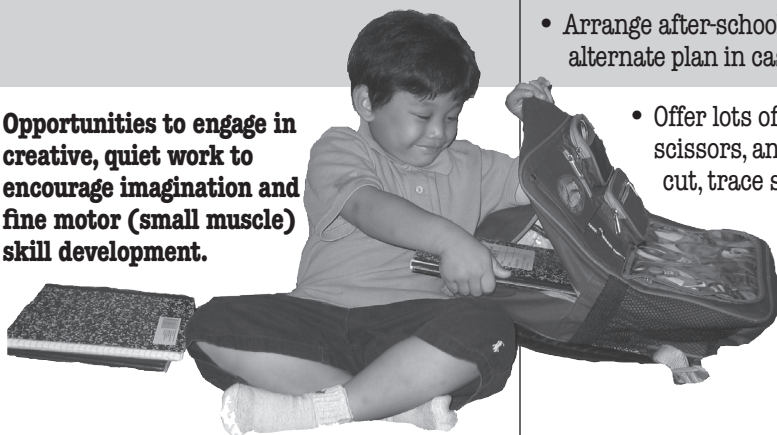
CENTER ON THE FAMILY ♥ UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII



Raising a School-Ready Child Being Ready for Each Day

Starting school is an exciting time, but requires an adjustment to new routines and expectations for the child, parents, and care providers. Providing a consistent daily school routine can provide your child with the stability and predictability she will need to succeed each day. The following are some simple things you can do to help.

A Child Needs:	Parents and Care Providers Can:
<p>Plenty of rest to support growth and attentiveness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure your child has at least 8 hours of sleep each night. • Have a set bedtime routine such as bathing, brushing teeth, and reading a book together at the same time every night, including weekends.
<p>Healthy meals and snacks to support growth and learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide your child with a nutritious breakfast each morning either at home or through the school's breakfast program, if available. • Offer choices with meals when possible, for example, ask, "Would you like an apple or banana with your cereal?" • Make sure your child has lunch each day, e.g., home lunch, money to buy lunch, or arrangements for free/reduced-cost lunch.
<p>Good hygiene practices for health and safety.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure your child bathes daily and washes her hair regularly. • Supervise your child as she brushes her teeth after every meal or at least twice a day. • Remind your child to wash her hands frequently, and especially after using the bathroom and before and after meals/snacks.
<p>To get to school and be picked up on time each day for consistency and reassurance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check that your child's school bag is packed and ready the night before school. • Have a set time for her to wake up, dress, eat breakfast, and leave home each morning. • Arrange after-school care and pick up for your child; have an alternate plan in case of emergencies; let her know what this plan is.
<p>Opportunities to engage in creative, quiet work to encourage imagination and fine motor (small muscle) skill development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer lots of crayons, markers, paints, blunt child-sized scissors, and sheets of paper for her to use to scribble, write, cut, trace shapes, draw, and paste. • Provide materials such as puzzles, play-dough, large beads (or cereal) to string together, to help strengthen your child's small muscles. • Do activities together such as making a book or collage.



Continued on back

A Child Needs:	Parents and Care Providers Can:
<p>Time to be physically active for exercise, to burn off energy, and strengthen gross motor (large muscle) skills.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer opportunities to play inside or outside in a safe environment—to run, jump, skip, dance, climb, or pedal. • Play active games with your child. • Encourage her to play with other children.
<p>A quiet place and time to do homework to help with focus and concentration.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a quiet, well-lit workspace; turn off the TV and limit other distractions. • Designate a specific time each day for doing homework and keep to the schedule consistently, e.g., before dinner. • Check that your child’s homework is done and ready to be turned in to the teacher.
<p>Shared family time to strengthen bonds and to build a sense of belonging.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share at least one meal a day together; encourage everyone at the meal to share about their day. • Read with your child at least 10 minutes each day, even when she can read on her own; ask questions or talk about the story together. • Go on outings together whether to shop or to borrow books from the library.
<p>Regular medical and dental care for good health.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform the school of your child’s special health needs and/or medications. • Schedule regular appointments with her health care provider and dentist. • Make sure she is up-to-date on all required immunizations.
<p>Opportunities to complete activities independently.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let your child be responsible for taking dishes to the kitchen sink after eating. • Make it easier for her to do a task by herself, e.g., put milk from a jug into a smaller pitcher so she can pour her own drink. • Have her put dirty clothes in a designated laundry basket and put away her clothes after they have been washed.

