

Just for families transitioning to school....

## Wonderful children's picture books:



"Mom, It's My First Day of Kindergarten!" by Hyewon Yum, (Macmillan, 2012)

"Fiona the pig's big day" by Leigh Hobbs (Penguin, 2008)

"First day" by Margaret Wild and Kim Gamble (Allen & Unwin, 1998)

"Tom goes to kindergarten" by Margaret Wild and David Legge (ABC Books, 2010)

"I am too absolutely small for school" by Lauren Child (Candlewick Press, 2005)

"Welcome to Kindergarten" by Anne Rockwell (Walker & Co, 2004)



Nutrition Snippet



## The simplest way

to get your vitamin D!

**Did you know?**

- Our bodies make vitamin D when skin is exposed to sunlight.
- We need vitamin D as well as calcium to maintain good health, in particular to keep our bones and muscles strong and healthy.
- Always use sun protection when UV levels are 3 and above.

**Does sunscreen stop vitamin D?**

- Sunscreen filters out most but not all UV radiation.
- People who use sunscreen regularly when UV levels are 3 and above, don't have lower vitamin D levels than people who do not use sunscreen.



For more information visit [www.eatittobeatit.com.au](http://www.eatittobeatit.com.au) or join us at [facebook.com/eatittobeatit](https://www.facebook.com/eatittobeatit)

The Eat It To Beat It program is supported by the Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District Live Life Well @ School Program.





## When your child listens to stories or looks at books;

He learns to listen

He has an opportunity to increase his vocabulary by hearing new words read to him

He learns about different concepts, people and places

He learns to enjoy books and reading

His mind is stimulated, visualising the things he is hearing about

<http://www.kinderteacher.com/ValueOfPlay.htm>

## Natalie shares her family's story.....

We participated in the 'Transitions' supported playgroup located at our local school with our eldest daughter Grace, our first baby to attend school.

'Transition' was definitely the operative word for this fantastic program and we saw the gradual changes in our daughter Grace as she attended each week. Although Grace was excited about the idea of school because her older cousin attends, she was initially apprehensive about going. However, the familiar play based learning environment that was set up for the children put her at ease. The school hall where the program was hosted was set up with different activity stations for the kids to join in as they pleased, including a quieter place to read a story with mum or dad.

Later in the program the kids visited the library, the office and some of the kindy classes. Grace found the visits to the kindergarten classes one the most valuable experiences. She loved meeting the teachers and doing some 'real work'. Looking back I realise that these visits also allowed her to practice separating from us in the new school environment. This was good practice for us too and gave us a level of confidence in how she might cope on her first day of school.

Attending the playgroup each week allowed Grace to gain familiarity with both the layout and noise of the playground, some of the teachers and the Principal, who she felt confident to approach to say hello and occasionally hug! She also made some new friends and became more used to introducing herself to new people. It gave her familiar faces to find at recess and lunchtime, which we all know can make or break a child's school experience. By the end of the program Grace felt confident and excited about attending school, which really showed in her language as she now called it 'my school', rather than her cousin's.

For me and Dan it was great to meet other parents, some of whom were first timers like us and others who had older kids already at school. It also helped us practice getting her out the door with her lunch box packed and to trouble shoot things like opening containers and using the school toilets, which are very different from the open plan of a day care or preschool. These aspects definitely helped with preparing Grace and improving her independence, as well as reinforcing concepts such as personal privacy which vary greatly from a preschool environment.

Transitions also helped our younger daughter Amelia adapt to the idea of Grace going to school and understand that she would not be at home or preschool during the day to play with. This was really important, as Grace starting school has been a big change for her as well.

I really can't praise the Transitions to School program highly enough. It was a really positive experience for our family and I know it was instrumental in helping Grace to settle into the routine of school with confidence.

***Natalie and her family participated in a two-term, 2 hour per week supported playgroup at her local school.***

***It might be time to find out what is happening at your child's school this year.***

Starting school is an important time for children and families. Children who make a positive start to school are more likely to feel comfortable, relaxed and valued, feel excited and motivated to learn, have good relationships with others, develop a sense of belonging within the school community.

Starting school is not just about the first day. It's a process that begins when children and families start to prepare in the year before, and continues as children experience their first days, weeks and months of school. The process involves a number of changes for children and families, and everyone reacts differently.

For some children the change brings excitement about making friends and learning new things, while for others the change can leave them feeling nervous and overwhelmed. You may reflect on your own school experiences and be reminded of the mix of emotions you felt when starting school.

Families play an important role in supporting children to manage the transition to primary school. With the support of your child's early childhood educator and school teacher, you can help them to cope with the new challenges by developing their social, emotional and learning skills. Supporting your child's skills in these areas contributes to their mental health and wellbeing.

Children who are mentally healthy are better learners, have stronger relationships and are better able to meet life's challenges.

For more information go to: Kids Matter, <https://www.kidsmatter.edu.au/families/starting-school/1-thinking-about-transition-school>