

# Kindergarten – setting up for success

Create a safe, supportive and inclusive classroom to promote a positive school experience

Tips to help make school a happy place:

- Greet each student by name
- Focus on familiarising students with the class routines and expectations
- Remind students through the day what the next activity will be (after a while, ask them to tell you what comes next)
- Use visual timetables and prompts to clarify activities and chronology
- Be clear and specific about daily times ('after lunch')
- Routines, processes, structures and systems are reassuring. They increase predictability and decrease anxiety
- Stick to normal routines as much as possible
- Encourage children and parents to develop a 'goodbye ritual' involving choices that give some control. I.e. "... one hug or two?"
- Prepare students for any foreseeable changes
- Be calm and consistent
- Build trust by always being reliable. For example, always follow through on promises
- Explicitly teach social skills
- Notice and reinforce positive behaviours using explicit feedback and acknowledgement
- Suggest that parents leave the child with a positive picture of the day ahead. I.e. "After work, I will pick you up and then we will go to the shops on our way home"
- Answer questions in simple and straightforward ways
- Avoid parents "sneaking" away as this reinforces any fear of loss and/or lack of control the student may feel
- Plan relationship-building games and activities

- Actively encourage positive interactions between students
- Create a “calm area” in the classroom with objects, prompts and activities that calm and comfort
- Analyse and understand the social dynamics in the classroom
- Identify any students who may need assistance with social connections and help them to form friendships
- Regularly share information with parents and let students see you building friendly relationships with their parents
- Spend time getting to know each student
- Allow students to bring a comfort object from home such as a toy or photo