



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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NEW SET OF SCHOOL PREPAREDNESS TIPS FOR PARENTS

This week's tips suggest ways for parents to get involved in their child's school.

First Steps today released its next set of weekly school readiness tips for parents. The tips can also be found on the First Steps website at www.scfirststeps.org/press.htm.

How to Get Involved in Your Child's School

Your involvement is a big factor in your child's school experience. "Studies all conclude that when parents are active and involved in school, student achievement goes up and the school gets better," says Anthony Coletta, Ph.D., professor of early childhood and elementary education at William Paterson University. Here are some ways you can contribute:

- **Meet the teacher.** Make a date with your child's teacher during the first few weeks of school. At this meeting, ask how your child is adjusting, and share goals for your child and any individual needs she may have. Another benefit: you'll feel comfortable speaking to the teacher about issues that arise during the year.
- **Get to know the school principal.** By meeting the principal you can find out what opportunities exist for parental involvement, and what recommendations he gives teachers about keeping parents informed.
- **Attend back-to-school night.** Most schools host this event about a month into the new academic year.
- **Find out the best way to keep in touch.** Some teachers are receptive to e-mails or phone calls, while others prefer in-person meetings. Ask your child's teacher the best way to contact her.
- **Volunteer in the classroom.** Kindergarten classrooms usually offer many ways for parents to lend a helping hand.
- **Join the PTA or PTO.** Not all parents' schedules allow them to help out during the school day. You can still make a difference by becoming a member of the PTA or PTO and participating in school committees.
- **Continue the learning at home.** Do activities and projects at home that will build on the literacy and math skills your child is learning at school. Teachers often provide materials for this.

Source: Scholastic "Parent Guides"

<http://www.scholastic.com/familymatters/parentguides/kindergarten/involvement.htm>

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South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness ('First Steps') is a comprehensive, results-oriented statewide education initiative to help prepare children to reach school healthy and ready to succeed. Public and private support are combined through county partnerships to enable individual communities to address the unmet needs of young children and their families. First Steps' Countdown to Kindergarten is designed to leverage local resources to aid successful transitions of SC's most at-risk children into kindergarten, and to target early parent involvement and increased community awareness of the importance of school readiness. Nearly 1,300 children and their families will participate in this year's Countdown program. Over 120 certified kindergarten teachers in 34 counties are currently conducting a series of eight visits to each participating family's home to prepare the child for starting school and open the relationship with the child's family.

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