



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 4, 2005

CONTACT: Meghan Wedd McGuire
(803) 734-0867
mwmcguir@sde.state.sc.us

NEW SET OF SCHOOL PREPAREDNESS TIPS FOR PARENTS
This week's tips help parents establish a back to school routine

Getting Back into the School Routine

- As the first day of school approaches, move bedtime back to an earlier time.
- In the summer, it's easy to slip into having meals at irregular hours. Start to make meal times more regular and aligned with the school year schedule.
- Put a positive spin on going back to school. Talk about the fun things your child will be learning, the old friends he'll see and the new friends he'll make.
- If your child is anxious about starting the next grade, reassure her that other children have these feelings too.
- Don't make plans for big trips right before the start of school.
- Establish school-day schedules for homework, TV, baths and bedtime.
- Arrange play-dates with friends from school to re-establish connections that may have been dropped for the summer, or to create new ones.

Confirm Your After-School Care Arrangements

- Make sure your child knows where he is going after school.
- Double-check on your care plans and touch base with the provider before school starts.
- If your child will be home alone after school, establish safety rules for locking doors and windows, and for answering the door and the telephone. Make sure she knows to check in with you or another adult when she arrives at home.

Control the TV

- As you get ready to go back to school, start to put limits on watching television if you haven't done so during the summer.
- Set an example by not watching a lot of TV yourself. Have family activities such as reading or board games.
- Choose wisely. There are some TV programs that can be a valuable tool for learning and expanding one's awareness of the world.

Source: GreatSchools.net

###

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 participated in this year's Countdown program.

1300 Sumter Street • Concord Building, Suite 100 • Columbia, South Carolina 29201
Phone: 803-734-0479 • Fax: 803-734-1431 • Web site: www.scfirststeps.org