



| NSW Department of Education

Getting ready for primary school



Starting school is a big milestone for children and their families. The transition between learning environments can be both challenging and exciting. This guide is packed with information to help you and your family get your child ready for primary school.

Help your child through the transition by supporting them to:



explore their feelings



connect to their school



build friendships and relationships



develop their confidence and independence.

Get ready for Kindergarten



✓ Tick off the tasks that apply to you.



If your child attends an early childhood education service, talk to staff about their transition to school.



If your child takes medication or has an allergy, a medical condition, disability or additional learning and support needs, inform the school as early as possible and make an appointment to speak with school staff.



Attend a school orientation or transition to school program and make sure you have the school's phone number. If you need help with English, ask for an interpreter to be present at the orientation meeting. The school will arrange one if required.



Practise safely walking or travelling to and from school.



Contact the school for an enrolment pack.



Apply for a school Opal card if needed. Phone 131 500 or go to

transport.nsw.gov.au/ssts



Take your child to your local community health nurse or doctor for a health check and make sure their immunisations are up to date before school starts. For details visit

health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation



Organise outside of school hours care, if needed.



Talk about the plan for after school pickup.



Before you start

Enrolment

Schools can help with enrolment questions throughout the year. You may need to attend an interview with the principal. There you can discuss any disability or additional learning and support needs, medical conditions, or other special circumstances before your child starts school. The school will work with you to develop a personalised learning and support plan, health care plan or a behaviour support plan if needed to support your child's needs.

Voluntary school contributions

All NSW public schools can request contributions to enhance educational and sporting programs. School contributions are voluntary and payment is a matter for decision by parents.

Financial assistance for extra-curricular activities

Schools may charge for extra-curricular activities that go beyond the minimum requirements of the curriculum. Parents who are unable to pay for extra-curricular activities because of financial hardship may be eligible for assistance from the school.

The principal will ensure no student or family suffers any discrimination or embarrassment over failure to make a voluntary or extra-curricular contribution.

Telephone Interpreter Service

If you would like more information from the school and you need an interpreter, please call the Telephone Interpreter Service on 131 450 and ask for an interpreter in your language. Tell the operator the phone number of the school you want to call and the operator will get an interpreter on the line to assist you with the conversation. You will not be charged for this service.

Budgeting for new costs

Schools usually provide most things Kindergarten students will use in the classroom, but starting school may require new items such as uniforms and school shoes. It may be helpful to check with your child's school so you can budget for the items your child will need.

Uniforms

Your child's school will tell you about the school uniform items and where to buy them. There is usually a summer, a winter and a sports uniform. The school can tell you which shops supply the uniform or the material to make it, and many schools run a clothing pool where uniform items are donated after children have outgrown them.

Transition to School Statement

Your early childhood education service may give you a Transition to School Statement you can share with your child's school before they start. The Transition to School Statement gives a snapshot of your child's strengths, interests and preferred ways of learning.

Useful activities to try in the lead-up to starting Kindergarten



Don't forget

- Write down the date your child will start school.
- **Support your child to develop independence using the bathroom** – including urinals for boys – and practise good hand-washing techniques.
- **Write your child's name on all their school things and involve your child in organising them and recognising their name.** Make sure your child's name is not visible on the outside of anything they'll be wearing to and from school.
- **Practise the daily routine of travelling to and from school**, whether it is by car, walking, or public transport.

Try this

- Set up a play date for your child to play with a friend.
- Check out the local library and let your child choose books to borrow.
- Take a ball to a park to throw, catch and kick together.
- Organise a picnic with a packed lunch and encourage your child to open it and eat the food by themselves.

Help your child practise

- Putting on their school shoes and walking in them.
- Dressing in their school uniform.
- Drinking from bubblers.
- Cutting and pasting pictures from a magazine and drawing pictures.
- Opening and closing their lunch box and identifying food that is for lunch and food that is for recess.

Explore the Daisy's First Day story and activities

Meet Daisy the koala on her first day of school and help your child get familiar with the school environment.

- Read the comic, Daisy's First Day, with your child. You can find the comic on the primary school poster that came with this guide or on our website.



More Daisy resources are available on our website

- Download the picture book version of Daisy's First Day or watch the animated video.
- Print the Daisy colouring sheets and puzzle.



Scan the QR code or visit

education.nsw.gov.au/daisy



The big day

The first day of Kindergarten is a big event in your child's life – and that of your entire family. To help you make the most of the day and enjoy the experience, here are some helpful tips.



The night before

- Lay out your child's clothes, shoes and socks.
- Make your child's morning tea and lunch and put it in the fridge.
- Help your child pack their school bag.
- Pack a spare pair of underpants, socks and a change of clothes. Let your child know these are there in case they have any toilet accidents at school.



On the day

- Be confident with your child and let them dress themselves as much as possible.
- Tie back or plait long hair.
- Apply sunscreen and get your child to wear their hat on the way to school.
- Don't forget to take photos.
- Pick your child up on time.



School routines

Getting to and from school safely



Getting your child to and from school is your responsibility – however your child's school wants this to happen safely every day.

Pick the safest way to school and practise travelling the route with your child. Talk about how to be a safe road user.

Keep your school community safe by:

- role modelling how to be safe as a pedestrian, passenger or cyclist
- always holding your child's hand when walking on the footpath, in the car park and when crossing the road
- using the safest place to cross the road
- dropping off and picking up your child from the school side of the road
- never calling your child from across the road
- ensuring your child is properly buckled up in the right child restraint for their age
- driving and parking legally, even if it means parking further away and walking the rest of the way to school.

Share this information with your child's carers such as grandparents, nannies and friends who may be taking your child to or from school.

education.nsw.gov.au/safe-travel

Saying goodbye



At first, you might like to stay for a while until your child feels secure at school. When your child has settled into school, a short and reassuring goodbye encourages independence. Let them know who will pick them up at the end of the day.

Picking up children at the end of the day



When school finishes each day, your child's class will gather at a regular place. Your child's teacher will wait with the children. Make sure your child and their teacher know who will be collecting them each afternoon. This could be a parent, a carer or an after school care worker. Children can get upset if the person picking them up comes late. Check with their teacher about the best time to arrive in the afternoon and where to stand.

Out of school hours care (OSHC)



OSHC includes before and after school care (BASC) and vacation care services. OSHC services provide education and care for primary school-age children outside school hours and during school vacations. Services are often open on pupil-free days as well.

OSHC services:

- support children's learning achievement, engagement and wellbeing
- provide developmental play opportunities in a multi-age environment
- support families to work or study outside school hours.

Your school can give you information about local services, or visit the BASC finder to find your closest OSHC.

service.nsw.gov.au/basc

The Child Care Subsidy helps eligible families with the cost of childcare for out of school hours.

humanservices.gov.au/childcaresubsidy



Every day counts



A day away from school here or there doesn't seem like much but absences add up.

Student attendance at school has an impact on academic achievement and social and emotional wellbeing for individual students. Good student attendance is achieved when schools and families work in partnership to support every student.

Attending school

Going to school every day is important and Kindergarten sets children up for the rest of their schooling.

What your child learns each day builds on what they learned the day before. If your child misses school, their learning routine is broken. Students can also lose confidence and miss out on building their friendships.

You have a legal responsibility to send your children to school every school day.

If your child misses school due to illness, religious reasons, family circumstances or other reasons, contact the classroom teacher. Remember to contact the school within 7 days to explain the reason for their absence.

If your child arrives at school late or needs to leave early, you will need to go to the office to sign your child in or out and explain the reason for the absence.

If you're having difficulty getting your child to school every day and on time, contact the classroom teacher.

If you need help with English, ask for an interpreter. The school will arrange one if available.

When your child misses just...

1 day per fortnight

they miss upwards of

4 weeks per year

which equates to over

1 year missed over their school life



Learning and activities

Most time in Kindergarten is spent developing children’s literacy and numeracy skills. There are 6 key learning areas studied throughout primary school:

Creative arts

English

Human society and its environment (HSIE)

Mathematics

Personal development, health and physical education (PDHPE)

Science and technology

Did you know?

Your child will have access to Adobe, Microsoft and Google software with free, filtered internet and unlimited secure cloud storage in the classroom.

Best Start Kindergarten Assessment

The Best Start Kindergarten Assessment is a state-wide assessment that helps teachers identify the literacy and numeracy skills which your child brings with them at the beginning of Kindergarten.

Children come to school with a range of experiences, skills and abilities. The assessment provides teachers with the opportunity to sit with a child one-on-one, focusing on what that child can do in literacy and numeracy, so they can plan effective teaching and learning programs. The assessment does not require students to prepare or study.

Your school will provide more information about the assessment and ways you can support your child to develop literacy and numeracy skills at home.

Resources are also available on our website.

education.nsw.gov.au/helping-your-child-with-literacy-and-numeracy-at-home

NAPLAN

Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 students in Australian schools sit the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN).

NAPLAN is held in May and involves 4 different tests:

- language conventions (spelling, punctuation and grammar)
- writing
- reading
- numeracy.

They are not English or mathematics tests. Rather, NAPLAN assesses students’ general literacy and numeracy skills, which are required in all subject areas. Texts used in NAPLAN come from a variety of key learning areas.

Students with disability or additional learning and support needs may require adjustments to support their learning. Contact your school to discuss further.

Getting your child ready for literacy learning in primary school



Literacy involves speaking and listening, reading and writing. Engaging with your child in play-based literacy activities every day will support their development of early literacy skills.

Talk and interact with your child. Through talk, children not only learn about communicating with others, they also learn how to take turns, ask questions and develop a knowledge of words. Together these help to create a strong foundation for the development of reading and writing skills.

Try some of the following activities with your child.

Speaking and listening

Developing speaking and listening skills are important for children to socialise, make friends and to actively participate in school activities.

- Make conversations fun. For example, make up funny or nonsense rhymes.
- Talk with your child about events as they happen, using everyday words and your home language.
- Have fun with the sound of letters. Make up silly sentences using words that start with the same sound such as, "Sam sat on six socks."

Drawing and writing

Encourage your child to draw or write about topics that interest them. This will support your child to explore how messages can be communicated in different ways.

- Ask your child to draw or write about things they like to do, make or play.
- Encourage them to create a card for a friend or an invite to a special event or celebration.
- Support your child to draw or write something special for a friend or a family member.

Reading

Read to and with your child daily. Encourage your child to explore books by themselves or with a family member. This will support your child to understand how books work and to build a love of reading.

- Play word games with rhyming words.
- Read books with rhymes and riddles that your child enjoys reading.
- Sing songs. Make up a song about an everyday activity such as getting dressed.

Always encourage your child and use activities and topics that they are interested in. If you speak a language other than English it is important that you support your child to use their home language when talking, reading and writing.

Most importantly, have fun with your child and make use of the literacy opportunities in everyday activities. The early years are critical to developing a lifelong love of learning.



Eating at school

Eating at school will be a different experience for your child compared with eating at home or at preschool. There are no places to keep food hot or cold. Children often sit on the grass or on benches and balance their food on their knees. They will also need to be able to open everything their food is wrapped in and they won't want to spend so much time eating that they miss out on playing.

Tips to help your child



- Encourage your child to practise eating from the lunch box at home.
- Pack food that is easy to open, easy to eat and not messy.
- If your child needs utensils like chopsticks or cutlery make sure these are packed with their lunch.
- Write your child's name on their lunch box, water bottle and any other containers.
- Include a frozen drink bottle to keep food cold. Wrap it in a tea towel in case it leaks.
- Use insulated lunch boxes or cooler bags.
- Avoid using plastic wrap because children find it hard to pull apart. Paper bags are better for the environment too.
- Pack tissues or paper around fruit so it won't bruise.
- Remind your child to wash their hands before eating and to use the toilet at recess and lunch.
- Pack a water bottle for your child each day and remind them that they can also get water from the taps or bubblers throughout the day.
- If your child can order food from their school canteen, help them to identify healthy food and drink choices.

Recess and lunch ideas



- Cut fruit into pieces and put them in a small container. Squeeze some lemon juice on apples or pears to stop them from going brown.
- Cut up vegetables such as carrots, celery and cucumber. Put dips or yoghurt in a separate container.
- Make wholemeal muffins and freeze them.
- Try different breads, such as rolls, roti, pita, wholegrain or tortilla wraps.
- If using tomato in a sandwich, slice it thinly and place the slices between other fillings to stop the sandwich from going soggy.
- Cook a little extra dinner and save some for lunch the next day. You could make fried rice, curry, quiche, homemade pizza slices, salmon patties, roast vegetables, noodle salads or sausages. A freezer brick, frozen drink or insulated container can help keep this food fresh.



Health and wellbeing



You can help support your child's health and wellbeing as they start Kindergarten and move through primary school.

Talk with your child

- Check in with your child before, and particularly after, school.

How was your day?

What did you learn?

What was the highlight?

- Communicate with comfort and connection. Be relaxed in your facial expression and body. Get down to your child's level and offer gentle touch or affection.

I know Kindy is different from preschool. We have to go to school. Let's sit together and figure out how to make this easier.

- Validate and relate to your child's feelings. Consider how they're experiencing the situation from their point of view.
- Discuss and set limits. Wishes and feelings are acceptable but some behaviours are not. It is important to remain calm, clear and assertive.

I hear you want to play more. It is important that you get a good night's sleep before school. It is bedtime.

I can see you are frustrated but it is not OK to yell or hit.

- Notice and address any physical, behavioural or emotional changes. Some reactions to stress include tiredness, struggling to fall asleep, boredom, feeling irritable or acting out, being withdrawn or avoiding school and homework, complaints of an upset stomach or headache, excessively asking questions, or seeking reassurance. Always share any concerns with your child's teacher. They can get extra advice from the school counselling service, if needed.

Create routines at home



Make sure your child is getting a good night's sleep and at least 30 minutes of daily exercise.



Cook nutritious meals including breakfast, lunch and dinner and make sure they're eating regularly.



Encourage your child to stay hydrated, even in the colder months.



Read to your child as part of your daily routine.

Kindergarten children can get very tired at night because they are doing so many new and exciting things. For this reason, it helps if you keep before and after school routines – like bath time, meals and reading – as regular as possible. It's important to leave time for your child to play and get a good night's sleep each night.

education.nsw.gov.au/parents-and-carers/wellbeing

Your child may be feeling:

- **excited or happy** about starting school
- **nervous or anxious** because of the new routines
- **frustrated and annoyed** about all the changes.

It's important to remember that all of these feelings are normal and your child may react differently to others.

Connect with your child's learning

- Get to know their teachers, other school staff, other parents and your child's friends.
- Attend school events, for example parent and teacher nights, presentation nights, award ceremonies, performances or showcases.
- If you can, provide your child with out-of-school opportunities to bond with their friends and the community such as volunteering, sports and supervised play dates.

Dealing with challenges

The past 2 years have brought a lot of change and disruption for everyone, including children. Whether your child has attended preschool or is starting primary school for the first time, they may experience difficulty settling into school routines.

How to support your child during the pandemic

- Monitor the media your child is watching.
- Talk to your child about their understanding of the situation and correct misunderstandings or confusion.
- Include your child in making plans for the future.
- Support your child to stay connected to friends.
- Keep to your regular routines and activities as much as possible.

A safe and supportive environment



Anti-bullying environment

All NSW public schools actively prevent student bullying and encourage appropriate behaviour by helping students build social skills and respect for others.

Schools develop their own anti-bullying plan which includes strategies to reduce bullying behaviour, cyberbullying or harassment, and school staff are trained to respond to these situations. Contact the school for a copy of your school's anti-bullying plan or to report a concern.

The anti-bullying section on our website includes evidence-based research to support educators, parents and carers, and students to identify, prevent, and respond effectively to student bullying behaviours.

education.nsw.gov.au/anti-bullying

Support services and school counselling

All NSW public schools have access to psychological expertise through the school counselling service. School counselling staff can help students who are having difficulties at school or home. They can connect families with services outside of school if needed. You may make an appointment to access the school's counselling or psychology services by contacting the school.





Supporting your child

Your child's teacher is your partner in supporting their education. They will let you know the best way to keep in touch with them and find out about your child's progress. Keep your child's teacher informed of any changes in your child's life that may affect their learning or enjoyment of school.

Additional support

Public schools provide a range of other staff who contribute to personalised learning and support for students where needed.

These positions include:

- learning and support teachers and school learning support officers (SLSO) also known as teachers' aides
- specialist vision and hearing itinerant teachers
- English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D) teachers
- community information and liaison officers
- home school liaison officers
- Aboriginal education officers and teams.

Contact your school office if you think your child would benefit from these support services or you would like to know more.

How to find the right person if you have questions or concerns

The best education happens when families and schools work together.

If you have questions about your child starting Kindergarten, our website has information on the enrolment process and finding your local school. Contact your local school if you want to talk to someone before term starts. If you have questions about your child's progress and readiness for school, speak to your child's early childhood educator, doctor or your local primary school.

Once your child has started school, you may have questions or concerns. Your child's teacher is often the best place to start if you would like to talk about your child's progress. If you aren't sure who to talk to, your child's teacher or school office staff can give you the right contact details.

education.nsw.gov.au/your-feedback

Engaging with your child's education

Relationship building is at the heart of the transition to school process. Your school is committed to working with you to ensure you have all the information and support you need to help your child get the most out of school. In addition, you have the right to feel welcome at school, to be treated fairly and to be able to actively participate in your child's schooling.

We ask that in return you commit to making your interactions with your child's teachers, other school staff, other parents and other children positive. We are all partners in our children's education. Every child has the right to expect their best interests will shape our decision making and actions.

School staff have the right to feel safe in their workplace and be free of intimidating actions or language as well as inappropriate or unhelpful communications. All our interactions and communications – including those about difficult or complex issues – should be timely, respectful, transparent and focused on solutions.

All public schools in NSW have a School Community Charter which provides the framework for school-based behaviour and interactions. The charter creates clear expectations and a framework by which we can all be held to account. If at any time you think a communication or interaction has not been handled in line with the charter, please raise this with your school or the department.

education.nsw.gov.au/school-community-charter

High potential and gifted

High potential and gifted children are those whose potential is more advanced compared to their same-age peers in one or more domains: intellectual, creative, social-emotional or physical. Opportunities exist in all NSW public schools for high potential and gifted children. Contact your school to talk with the principal about the programs offered.

Support for students who are learning English

If your child is learning English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D) they may require additional support to develop English language skills. Schools provide language support for EAL/D learners to participate fully in schooling, including support for children who speak Aboriginal English at home. Contact your school to discuss with the principal how the needs of EAL/D learners are met.

Aboriginal students

In some communities, there are additional tailored transition programs working to enhance the educational outcomes for Aboriginal students. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and carers are encouraged to participate in the development of their child's personalised learning pathway (PLP). For more information about tailored transition programs and PLPs, contact your school.

Students with disability and additional learning and support needs

The NSW Department of Education is committed to building a more inclusive education system, where every student feels welcome and can learn to their fullest capability, and that meets the needs of students with disability, their families and their community. The Disability Strategy sets out our plan for meeting these commitments.

To achieve this, NSW public schools provide a range of specialist services to support students with disability and additional learning and support needs. This includes support for students' diverse needs in learning or behaviour, students with disability and students with additional health and wellbeing needs.

Every mainstream NSW public school has a learning and support teacher, who works directly in the school to support students with disability and additional learning and support needs, and their classroom teachers.

If your child has a disability or additional needs, start by talking to your local public school. The school will have a meeting with you to find out more and talk about how they can help.

A school can make reasonable adjustments for your child – for example, changes to lessons, or to the classroom, or even big changes like putting in ramps or doing building work. You know your child best, so it is important to have early conversations so that you and the school can work together to come up with a plan.

All parents and carers have a right to enrol their child in their local public school. Parents and carers can also apply to enrol their child in a support class in a mainstream school or school for specific purposes where this best meets the needs of their child. The department acknowledges the importance of parental choice regarding the type of education provided to their child. Regardless of where a child is enrolled, all education programs in place for a student with disability need to be regularly reviewed with the student and their parents and carers to determine its ongoing appropriateness.

[education.nsw.gov.au/
starting-school-with-additional-needs](https://education.nsw.gov.au/starting-school-with-additional-needs)



Sickness and allergies



If your child is sick at school

If your child gets sick or injured at school, the school will contact you. If your child is ill, they will go to an area where they can lie down and be monitored. You will be called to come and collect your child if they are too sick to go back to the classroom. For this reason, it is important to keep your contact details up to date with the school, including an alternative contact – such as a relative or neighbour – the school can call should you be unavailable.

If your child is sick at home

From time to time your child may get sick. If they display any of the following symptoms, they should stay at home and see a doctor:

- a fever of 38°C or above
- vomiting or diarrhoea
- cough or respiratory symptoms
- cold or flu symptoms
- rashes of an unknown origin.



Head lice

Head lice spread when children are in close contact. They are easily treated and are not harmful to your child. Having head lice is not a reflection on your child's level of personal hygiene.

Preventing head lice

- Check your child's hair regularly.
- Keep long hair tied back, plaited or braided.
- Keep a fine-toothed comb in the bathroom and encourage your family to use it when they wash their hair.

Treating head lice

Daily combing with a white hair conditioner using a fine-toothed comb will help get rid of head lice and their eggs (nits). If your child has head lice, let the school know so they can ask other families to check their children's hair. Your child does not have to be identified.

health.nsw.gov.au/environment/headlice



Sun safety

Schools promote sun-smart behaviour by encouraging students and staff to Slip, Slop, Slap, Seek and Slide. Sun-safe uniform items – including hats that protect the head, neck and ears – are included in school uniforms. School staff encourage students to play in the natural and built shade environments around the school. Most schools have a no hat, no play policy so your child will need their hat to play outdoors with their friends at recess and lunch.

You can protect your child from the damaging effects of UV radiation by applying sunscreen each morning before they leave for school and ensuring they are wearing a sun-safe hat. Children can also wear sunglasses at school to protect their eyes from sun damage.

cancercouncil.com.au/sun-protection

Remember

It's important to keep the school informed of any changes to your child's health.



Allergies and asthma

It is important for you to inform the principal and the school if your child has asthma or allergies – not just those diagnosed as severe or food allergies. Anaphylaxis is a severe and sudden allergic reaction to allergens such as nuts or shellfish, or insect bites. If your child is diagnosed with asthma or at risk of an anaphylactic reaction, you must provide the school with information from your child's doctor, including an Action Plan for Anaphylaxis in accordance with the Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy (ASCIA).

The school will develop an individual health care plan to describe your child's needs and how the school plans to meet these needs during the school day, on excursions and in other school activities such as sport.

Schools and parents work together to put arrangements in place for health care support. Information from the child's doctor that you provide will inform the planning process.

allergyfacts.org.au



Ways to get involved with your school community

If you're a new family to the school you may want to connect with other families to get in touch with your children's friends or get involved in helping out with school activities.

1 Get connected

Ask the school if there are any school-specific apps or social media groups that you could join to help you connect with other parents or get updates on school activities. Check out your school's website and find out if they have a Facebook page or newsletter that promotes opportunities to get involved.

2 Parents and Citizens Association

The Parents and Citizens (P&C) association is a formal organisation for parents and members of the community to support their school and work out what's needed and wanted by the school. The P&C might do things like bring in facilities or equipment for the school; organise fundraisers; help with public events (like fetes or concerts) or get parents and citizens to work closely with teachers. As the principal attends P&C meetings, there is an opportunity for families and community members to be involved in curriculum and education matters at the school. The P&C usually has a budget which comes from voluntary donations as well as other sources like uniform shops, canteens or public fetes and carnivals. Joining the P&C is the best way to actively help the school and get a good understanding of what's going on.

pandc.org.au

3 Help out in the classroom

Parents may have opportunities to assist in the classroom. Each school is unique so your school can best advise ways you could help out. You could be a learning support volunteer or a mentoring volunteer. A classroom volunteer may help out by assisting the teacher and working with children in small groups, for instance on maths or reading and comprehension activities that the teacher has assigned. A mentoring volunteer will work one-on-one with a single student each week, offering face-to-face support, giving them confidence and working with them on academic activities.

4 Help out with school activities

As a parent you can help out beyond the classroom, for instance volunteering at the canteen, assisting at school sports carnivals, helping out at the library and assisting with school excursions, or after school activities. Every school will be different.

5 Initiate something you're passionate about

You may have your own ideas for improving the school and its community. For example, you may want to start a new club (like chess or debating) that doesn't exist in your school. Or you may know of a community partnership opportunity that you can develop with the school. You may have a fantastic idea for an after school activity that's not currently available. Maybe you want to offer an extracurricular activity like a language or sport. Maybe you know a great guest speaker that you can arrange to come and visit the school. Share your ideas with the school or the P&C.

The most important part of volunteering is that you're able to commit. Choose a school activity that you'll truly enjoy taking part in and get involved.

Ask your school if they have a Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG) and how they work with this group

The primary role of the NSW AECG is to promote active participation by Aboriginal people in the consultative and decision making process of education. All the members of local communities can become members of their Local AECG.

aecg.nsw.edu.au



Self-care tips for parents and carers

Self-care is incredibly important and can help to strengthen your family. If you're happy and healthy, you can be more attentive and engaged as a parent or carer.

When developing your own self-care routines and rituals, keep in mind that the more often you manage your wellbeing the longer you will be able to sustain a happy and positive household.

Here are some ways you can look after your physical and mental wellbeing to ensure you have enough energy to continue to successfully parent and care for your children:

Practice gratitude



When you start to feel overwhelmed, try to think about the good things in your life. Even if it's just little things. This helps you change your mindset and focus on the present instead of potential future anxieties. A mindful way to freshen up your gratitude practice is to notice new things you're thankful for every day.

Colour in with the kids



The reason adult colouring books are popular is simple; it's both fun and affordable. Just like it does for children, colouring clears the mind and channels focus into the task at hand, helping you to de-stress from other worries. It's a great way to have a digital detox too. So get the colored pencils out and get started.

Be kind to yourself



Keep in mind that everyone is under a lot more stress than normal. You may not have the same level of resilience, patience and mental fortitude that you normally have, and that's ok. Give yourself a break, and manage as best you can. Offer yourself encouragement and support and speak to yourself gently.

Create a schedule



Set aside some 'you' time in the schedule, whether it's going for a run, video-chatting with friends or sitting down to read. Make a firm date with yourself, instead of just saying you'll do it 'sometime later'. If you have a partner, coordinate with them so you both get regular, scheduled alone time.

Listen to music or a podcast



Music has the power to influence mood and energise. If you're feeling anxious, listen to calming music. If you're feeling low, listen to uplifting music. The best part is you can listen to music while doing other tasks and you can even involve your family for an impromptu dance party if you feel everyone needs it. Podcasts are also a great way to learn new things and get new perspectives while on the go or relaxing.



Useful websites

education.nsw.gov.au/useful-websites

Translated school information

education.nsw.gov.au/translated-documents

A-Z quick guide for parents

education.nsw.gov.au/parent-guide

Parents and carers resources

education.nsw.gov.au/parents-and-carers

Enrolment

education.nsw.gov.au/enrolment

Complaints, compliments and suggestions

education.nsw.gov.au/your-feedback

Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships

education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/aec

Aboriginal Education Consultative Group

aecg.nsw.edu.au

Disability, learning and support

education.nsw.gov.au/starting-school-with-additional-needs

NSW Health

health.nsw.gov.au

mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au

Road safety

education.nsw.gov.au/safe-travel

We acknowledge the homelands of all Aboriginal people and pay our respect to Country.

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Say hello

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GPO Box 33, Sydney NSW 2001
Australia
Phone: 1300 679 332

