

Welcome to Kindergarten

Toronto District School Board

Table of Contents

- Welcome to Kindergarten..... 3**
- Full-Day Kindergarten (FDK) 3**
- The Kindergarten Educator Team..... 3**
- Intentional Play-Based Learning..... 3**
- The Kindergarten Program 4**
- Come Learn With Us! 4**
- My Child Does Not Speak English Yet..... 5**
- Supporting All Children 5**
- Child Care Before and After School..... 5**
- Early French Immersion Program..... 6**
- EarlyON Child and Family Centres 6**
- Tips to Help Your Child Prepare for School..... 6**
- Attendance Matters in Kindergarten..... 7**
- How to Register for Kindergarten 7**
- In-Person Registration 7
- Online Registration 8

Welcome to Kindergarten

Starting school is an important milestone for children and their families.

At the TDSB, we are committed to creating inclusive, safe and caring classrooms that enable all children to learn and grow.

Register Your Child in [Full-Day Kindergarten](http://www.tdsb.on.ca/EarlyYears/KindergartenMonth) at <www.tdsb.on.ca/EarlyYears/KindergartenMonth>

Full-Day Kindergarten (FDK)

In the TDSB, 4 and 5-year-old children benefit from a rich full-day program. Children learn through play, inquiry, and exploration in the classroom and outdoors. We believe that young children are curious, competent, and capable of complex thinking. We are committed to providing high quality programming that will nourish each child's academic, social and emotional development and prepare them for success in school and in life.

The Kindergarten Educator Team

At the TDSB, teachers and early childhood educators (ECE) are committed to creating inclusive, safe and caring classrooms. Our schools provide a respectful environment in which all children can learn and grow. Teachers and early childhood educators work as a team to support children's learning.

Together they are able to:

- interact with each child every day to create a program based on your child's interests
- create a sense of belonging
- support their social and emotional needs and academic growth

A few of our classes have one teacher and 15 students. Classes that are larger have both a teacher and an ECE. In both situations, children are well supported by professional teachers and early childhood educators.

Intentional Play-Based Learning

Research tells us that there is a direct link between play and learning for children. Kindergarten students at the TDSB flourish because they participate in planned, purposeful play. Learning is integrated throughout the program enabling children to develop literacy and mathematical skills while fostering their independence, social skills and creativity.

To ensure children are equipped to succeed in today's global and digital world, our educators provide them with opportunities to be creative problem solvers. Classrooms across the TDSB are equipped with tablets, computer applications and a variety of software to promote innovation and teach students about safe and responsible use of technology.

The Kindergarten Program

Science explorations build inquiry skills, such as asking questions, predicting, planning, testing, analyzing, and drawing conclusions.

Outdoor learning occurs daily. Experiences outside encourage connections that build a sense of wonder and curiosity about the natural world.

Technology is a tool children use to develop skills in designing, communicating, and researching and documenting their own learning.

Literacy & numeracy is embedded in the program in many ways. Children learn about letters and numbers, read a variety books, and write messages.

Come Learn With Us!

Problem-solving activities provide opportunities to explore, create, communicate, and ask questions while developing small and gross motor skills.

Building with blocks develops problem-solving and spatial-reasoning skills which are connected to science, mathematics and other subjects.

The arts allow children to express themselves in multiple ways. Exploring with various materials enhances creativity, and the development of communication skills.

Self-regulation or social emotional learning involves communicating, reading, and writing. Through role play children build negotiation skills and empathy.

In Kindergarten, your child will build their skills, knowledge and experiences in four key areas of learning: Belonging & Contributing, Self-Regulation & Well-Being, Demonstrating Literacy and Mathematics Behaviours and Problem Solving & Innovating

Belonging and Contributing

Children are connected to others and play an important role in contributing to various groups, the wider community and the world around them.

Demonstrating Literacy and Mathematics

Behaviours Children think critically about the world around them and communicate their literacy and mathematical thinking and learning in different ways.

Problem Solving and Innovating

Children make meaning of the world around them by observing, questioning, planning, exploring, testing theories and solving problems.

Self-Regulation and Well-Being

Children develop a sense of self-awareness and an understanding of the importance of physical and mental health and wellness.

Source: The Kindergarten Program, 2016

My Child Does Not Speak English Yet

More than half of TDSB families speak a language other than English at home. Research shows that maintaining your child's first language has tremendous long-term benefits. We encourage families to continue speaking and reading with their child in their home language. Your child's classroom teacher or early childhood educator can provide information about where to access materials such as children's books and other information in different languages.

TDSB's Kindergarten program also supports children who do not speak English to build their communication skills in English.

Supporting All Children

Children in Kindergarten have a wide range of abilities, strengths and needs. We warmly welcome all children and work collaboratively with families to ensure a seamless transition into school.

Our priority is to ensure that all children have a positive experience in Kindergarten. Some children may have special education needs (e.g. physical disabilities, Speech & Language difficulties) or a diagnosis such as Autism Spectrum Disorder. In addition, some children may also require assistance in the area of personal care or skills of daily living. We are committed to making sure that all students with special education needs receive appropriate supports.

We encourage you to discuss the individual strengths and needs of your child and share any relevant documentation and concerns with the school upon registration. Please continue to discuss any concerns about your child with the teacher and early childhood educator. Educators and parents are partners in supporting young learners.

Child Care Before and After School

Many families require before- and after-school care for their children. There is an FDK Before- and After-School Program for 4 and 5-year-old children in many TDSB elementary schools. These programs are run by local licensed child care operators. In addition to these programs, TDSB also directly operates Extended Day Programs. These programs offer seamless learning experiences for children in FDK classrooms and are staffed by Designated Early Childhood Educators who work with children throughout the school day.

Find out more at [TDSB Childcare](#) and [TDSB Extended Day Program](#).

When you register your child at the school, speak with the Office Administrator or Principal about the availability of an FDK Before & After School Program, or Extended Day Program, including details about fees and registration.

Early French Immersion Program

At the TDSB, the Early French Immersion program begins in Senior Kindergarten. This is an opportunity for all children to learn a second or third new language. Application to this program is made the year your child is in Junior Kindergarten. Your child's school will provide you with further information about the online registration process. Complete information about the French Immersion program, application procedures and important deadlines can be found at www.tdsb.on.ca/french.

EarlyON Child and Family Centres

We invite you to visit an EarlyON Child and Family Centre with your child as part of your preparation for Kindergarten. In the TDSB, we have 77 school-based programs for parent(s) and/or caregiver(s), for children from birth to age 6. Parents/caregivers are fully involved in every activity. This includes them in their children's learning, builds confidence and connects them to other families. A listing of program locations is available at the [Pre-School Years webpage](http://tdsb.on.ca/parenting) <tdsb.on.ca/parenting>. These play-based programs are free and are designed to prepare children for learning in Kindergarten.

Here is some feedback directly from a parent and a school principal after visiting an EarlyON Child and Family Centre:

(Parent) In addition to being a single parent I am also a newcomer to Canada and I cannot begin to express how stressful this time was for me. The EarlyON Child and Family Centre gave my son and I the ability learn about the education system, to network with the school and other parents, and made it easier for us to make the transition from one country to another and be a part of the community.

(Principal) Our EarlyON Child and Family Centres have provided families with an opportunity to build a positive relationship with our staff, principals and vice principals and has allowed us to teach the necessary skills that our young learners need to effectively make the transition to Kindergarten. Our EarlyON Child and Family Centres have created the feeling that our school is truly the hub of the community.

Tips to Help Your Child Prepare for School

- Develop a relationship with your child's teacher and share information about his or her needs. Nobody knows your child like you do!
- Be positive and relaxed on their first day of school. Your attitude can greatly affect your child's feelings around school.
- Establish Kindergarten routines early, such as sharing with other kids, taking turns and listening to instructions.
- Talk to your child about what their day will be like at school and what sort of activities they will be taking part in.

- Ease anxiety around Kindergarten - talking positively will have an incredible effect on your child's approach to school.
- Encourage your child to use language to make his/her needs known and to solve problems (e.g. when sharing with others).
- Kindergarteners need to know how to make choices. Encourage choice at home during play time or while dressing themselves.
- Help prepare your child for math by talking about numbers, shapes and patterns at home and outside.

Attendance Matters in Kindergarten

The early years are the foundation for developing children's self-confidence, academic skills and sense of responsibility. Regular attendance at school allows children to participate in and benefit from daily learning experiences. Children who attend school regularly tend to feel more connected to their school and are better able to develop meaningful friendships. Research has shown that regular attendance is an important factor in student achievement and well-being.

How to Register for Kindergarten

Registration for all TDSB Kindergarten programs begins in February. We look forward to welcoming you and your child! You may choose to register in person at your local school or online.

In-Person Registration

Step 1

Find your [local school](http://www.tdsb.on.ca/Find-your/School) by visiting <www.tdsb.on.ca/Find-your/School>.

Step 2

Contact your local school and make sure you have the following documents:

- Proof of age (birth certificate or passport)
- Proof of address (two pieces of identification that show your address)
- Proof of immunization (the card that shows a list of needles your child has received)
- Verification of date of arrival, if your child was not born in Canada.

Online Registration

Step 1

Access the online registration system at [Kindergarten Come Learn With Us!](#) page to create an account, find your local school and complete an online registration form.

Step 2

Once you have completed the online portion of the registration process, you will receive a confirmation e-mail, including information about required next steps (e.g. when to visit the school).

When you visit the school, make sure you have the following documents:

- Proof of age (birth certificate or passport)
- Proof of address (two pieces of identification that show your address)
- Proof of immunization (the card that shows a list of needles your child received):
 1. Report online www.toronto.ca/studentvaccines.
 2. If unable to report online, parents can provide immunization to the school and the school will mail a copy to Toronto Public Health. Toronto Public Health accepts and translates foreign records.
 3. If requesting an exemption, call 416-392-1250.
- Verification of date of arrival, if your child was not born in Canada.

Please note: only parents or legal guardians can register a child for TDSB programs.

Come Learn With Us!

Early Years, Toronto District School Board