

You're not alone! Many parents (new and not-so-new) worry about what they can do to help their child be as ready as possible to start full-day Kindergarten. At Great Hearts Irving, we are known for our rigorous, advanced curriculum and high expectations, both academically and behaviorally, but our thoughts on the best ways to help your child be prepared to come to school may surprise you!

What Not to Do

- **Don't teach your child to write.** We teach our students to hold a pencil and form letters in very particular ways. If they have already learned a different way, that makes it harder on the child.
- **Don't worry about letters, numbers, or your child learning to read.** We will take care of all of these things once your child comes to school. Letters, numbers, and getting a leg up on reading are what Kindergarten is for! The very best gift you can give your preschooler is to read beautiful books to them, get them off screens, and allow them time for unstructured and imaginative play.

What to Do

- **Teach your child to speak to grownups.** Students need to be able to verbalize their needs to adults. One of the best things you can do is encourage your child to talk to the server and order their own food when you go out to eat at a restaurant!
- **Teach your child their whole name.** Students need to be able to identify themselves and their first and last name.
- **Teach your child to use a toilet properly, flush, wipe, and wash their hands.** Students will be using the bathroom independently, and it is hard to overestimate the importance of hygiene in a school.
- **Teach your child to dress themselves.** Kindergarteners need to be able to fasten and unfasten their pants and dress themselves without assistance should they need to change clothes.
- **Teach your child to buckle and unbuckle their seatbelts by themselves.** Students will need to be able to hop out of and back into their cars and buckle up every day. For everyone's safety, parents may not leave their vehicles during carline.
- **Help your child recognize your car.** Carline goes faster when all students know what their car looks like and can raise their hand to tell a teacher when they see it pull up. Both type and color, please; for example, "My mom drives a blue Toyota minivan!"

For more on Kindergarten at Great Hearts Irving, visit greatearthsirving.org/kindergarten.