

Parenting Education and Family Engagement*Working together to help students be successful in school.*

Take Home Tips

How Behavior Changes During the Transition to School

As children grow, they show many changes in their abilities and behavior. Here is what you can expect during the transition to school, ages 5 to 6.5 years.



- **Language** - At this age, children have a good grasp of language. They understand what you are telling them, and can communicate thoughts, feelings, and desires.
- **Friendships** - This is a time of friendships, when they enjoy being with other children.
- **Consequences** - Children this age understand the results of their actions and behavior, but still view the world with themselves at the center, so they may take things that don't belong to them, act defiant or rude, and not admit that they did something wrong.

How to Handle Challenging Behavior: Be firm yet kind. Criticizing will often make the behavior worse. When your child refuses to do something or acts defiant, give him another chance. For example, say, "I asked you to get your shoes on. Maybe you didn't hear me. Let's see how fast you can do it." It may be necessary to re-examine rules. If you seem to have conflict over and over about an issue, ask yourself if the rule is still reasonable.

Discipline Methods: Discipline methods that work for younger school-age children include natural and logical consequences, loss of privilege and restitution (making something right).

- **Natural and Logical Consequences** - If a child insists on wearing a winter coat in the middle of the summer, let him experience getting hot. If she refuses to pick up her toys, warn her they will be taken away for a day and then follow through.
- **Loss of Privilege and Restitution** - If your child behaves badly at a friend's house, don't allow him to play with that friend for a certain period of time. Expect your child to make restitution. If he breaks a friend's toy, he must fix it or replace it and be accountable for his behavior.

Source: Allen, Rose. How the Behavior Changes During the Transition to School, Ages 5-6

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