

# Pointers For Parents

## Preparing Your Child—And Yourself—For Preschool

(NAPSA)—Your child's first day of preschool may be just around the corner, but you may already be concerned that she won't make it into college because she hasn't perfected counting to 10...in French.

With morning TV shows dotting on pint-size geniuses and neighbors prepping their tots for top-notch private school "interviews," many parents are feeling the heat to get their child's academic career off to a good start. If your child is still a few ABC's away from your comfort zone, don't worry; there are other tips and tricks for ensuring preschool readiness:

- Ease separation anxiety. If your child hasn't experienced much time away from you, think about arranging a weekend with Grandma, or a few nights with a babysitter. If you aren't able to help your child adjust to the separation in advance, talk to your child's teacher about allowing you to linger during his first few days in school.

- Enforce a schedule at home. Preschools usually follow a predictable routine: story time, snack, art time, playground, music time. If your child doesn't keep to a schedule and each day is different from the last, it can help to standardize her days a bit before she starts preschool. Start by offering meals on a regular timetable. You can also plan to visit the park each afternoon, or set—and stick to—a bedtime routine.

- Introduce your child to technology. Today's schools are more wired than ever as technology becomes an increasingly integral part of life. And chances are your child is already more familiar with your television remote con-



**Age-appropriate technology can be a good way to help a child get ready for preschool.**

trol, DVD player, computer and cell phone than you are. But there are other, more age-appropriate technology products out there designed just for preschoolers. LeapFrog's ClickStart My First Computer is one example of a safe way to introduce 3-6-year-olds to early keyboarding and mousing skills on a keyboard that plugs into the TV.

- Practice playing with others. Many preschool activities, such as "circle time," give children a chance to play and learn together, but also require them to sit still, listen to stories and sing songs. If your child isn't used to facilitated group activities, you can start introducing them yourself. Take her to story time at the library, or sign her up for a class to help her get used to playing with other children.

Learn more at [www.leapfrog.com](http://www.leapfrog.com).