



To support the best transition to school it should be a collaboration between children, families, early educators and schools to support every child as they transition from, early education and care settings into kindergarten. Each child and family's transition to school is unique and special and begins long before children visit their new school for the first time.

The NSW Department of Education has identified 4 key skills and attributes that children need to thrive in schools:

Critical thinking / Problem solving

This is the ability to judge and weigh up information to solve a problem or make a decision. Critical thinking requires children to be curious, open-minded and able to see other people's perspectives. Problem solving involves thinking about situations and finding solutions to them. In a group situation, children also need to use cooperation and communication skills to solve problems.

Independent learning / Agency

This is having confidence in their own abilities, leading to positive self esteem, identity and wellbeing. Children who are independent and able to make choices about their learning are more motivated to learn and achieve goals.

Creativity

Creativity is original thinking, acting or making. In order to be creative, children need to be curious, motivated, open-minded, and not afraid to try new things or make mistakes.

Resilience

Resilience is being able to bounce back from challenges, stress, adversity and tragedy. Resilient children are brave, curious, flexible and adaptable. Self esteem, self worth, independence and hope are all increased by resilience. Being persistent and persevering with something assists in the development of resilience.

How families support these skills and attributes:

- **Communicate openly and honestly:** Talk about the good parts and hard parts of life with your child in an age-appropriate way. Explain how you've developed ways to deal with things when they get tricky or have persisted in learning something.
- **Keep listening as your child explores their feelings:** Believing that their parents (or other trusted adults) really value what they have to say and trust them to make their own decisions is an important part of building resilience in children. Try hard not to go into problem-solver mode, and support your child to understand their feelings.
- **Help your child get to know what they're "good at":** When children feel confident at some things, they will be more likely to try new things. Praise, acknowledge and encourage your child's natural strengths to help build a positive sense of self.
- **Help your child develop friendships:** Friends remind us that we are accepted "just because we are us" and not because we are related or bound to be with someone. You can support your child to learn how to introduce themselves, ask if they can play, take turns, and share.
- **Support their questioning skills:** Encourage your child's curiosity by asking open-ended questions. Talk about different perspectives on everyday topics help their thinking.
- **Encourage problem solving activities:** Engage in puzzles, games, and activities with your child where they need to take time to figure out the answer. Encourage them to find solutions to real-life problems or challenges; they could be your best helper. It's also important that your child is confident to ask others for help when they need it too; one of the best ways for your child to learn this is by you modelling it.
- **Read and talk about books:** Read a range of books and talk about what's happening or what might happen with your child. You can talk about the pictures, colours, characters, storyline, the letters and words.
- **Offer choice and responsibility:** Offer choices throughout the day for routines and activities to promote decision-making. Encourage your child to take on jobs and tasks, like putting their hat in their bag or setting the table to support their independence.
- **Provide open-ended play:** Provide materials for open-ended activities like drawing, building, or crafting. Let your child explore and create freely, and allow time for independent play and discovery.
- **Model imagination and creativity:** Engage in creative activities together. Show your child that making mistakes is a natural part of the creative process. Encourage imaginative play and storytelling; sometimes it's the sillier, the better.

