

A letter to a new kindergarten mom

Dear New Kindergarten Mom,

As we count down to the first day of kindergarten, you're probably worried about getting your child ready for this significant life transition.

I'm going to let you in on a secret. Far more difficult than becoming a kindergartener is becoming a kindergarten mom.

Your son will figure out how to write his full name and buckle his belt. Your daughter will learn how to hang her jacket in her cubby and recite your address. And kindergarten itself is actually a rollicking good time.

But you? You are wondering what lies ahead. Here is what I wish I had known:



You can do this. There are rules for carpool lanes and lunch packing and which side of the folder holds worksheets that stay home vs. go back to school. One day you'll realize you can do them in your sleep.



This is a learning year. No mother—or at least not the one writing this post—can remember to return the library book on Thursday, to send \$2 for pizza on Tuesday, to pack the right lunchbox with the right child, or have the gym outfit ready for gym day. Cut yourself some slack. [And never forget to send in an apple.](#)



For homework time, seat your child at the table, set a timer for 15 minutes, and stop

when it goes off. If your child comes home tired, skip homework. There's a good chance that coloring page won't be part of his college application.



Elementary school has so many days off. There are snow days and professional days and President's Day and spring break and winter break. Then there are half days. If you're a mother who works outside the home, you have my sympathy and understanding. School is magical, wonderful, and we are so fortunate to be able to give our children this opportunity, but it is simply not designed for families where both parents work outside the home.



Volunteer if you are able and interested. Don't feel guilty if you can't or don't want to. When you do go, he will beam and run to hug you, and your eyes will swell with tears of joy. When you don't, she will still have a great time.



Fundraisers happen. Let Aunt Maude buy wrapping paper if she wants to. Don't feel you need to sell 500 candy bars. Do what you can. Know that there will always be another fundraiser—and that you can support your school in many ways.



Befriend other parents—especially the ones whose children remember what the teacher says about the upcoming family project.



Find time to pray for your child, your child's teacher, and for the other students. And slip in a little prayer for your fellow new kindergarten moms.



Pack your tissues. You'll need them that first day. And maybe the second day, too.

Most important of all, remember that kindergarten is fun. Your child is about to make memories he will actually carry with him through life. She is going to learn material that will be the foundation for the rest of her education. And you are going to be watching in the wings—and trying to remember where that library book went.

I'll be right there with you. Two years after our first son started kindergarten, we're about to begin it all over again with our younger son. So I'll be feeling a little new all over again—and trying to remember my own advice.

I hope you and your child have a great year.

Sincerely,

A Not-So-New Kindergarten Mom Who Never Remembers that Library Day Is Thursday...or Maybe It's Monday?