

Welcome to **KINDERGARTEN** in Ontario!





When you reach...

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Welcome to
KINDERGARTEN
in Ontario!

Hi! I'm Amira. Tomorrow is my first day of kindergarten!
I feel excited and a little nervous.





Tonight, Mama, Papa and I pack my backpack. We also pre-pack lunch with my favourite food from home.

“Your lunch will remind you of home. You’re ready to go tomorrow,” Papa says.



“What will kindergarten be like?” I ask Mama.

“It will be wonderful,” Mama smiles. “You’ll play, learn new things and make new friends. Your teachers will help you!”



In the morning, Mama and I walk to school.
I hold her hand tightly. My backpack feels heavy,
but my heart feels excited.

My teacher, Ms. Lee,
greet me with a big
smile.

“Welcome, Amira!
We’re happy you’re
here!” she says.

I also meet Mr. Rosa,
our early childhood
educator. Ms. Lee
and Mr. Rosa help
everyone feel
welcome and safe.





Inside my classroom, students are playing and laughing.
There are blocks, books, crayons and even a sand table!



Ms. Lee and Mr. Rosa show us our cubbies where we hang our coats and backpacks. They teach us a fun song about making friends.



I feel hungry, so I eat my snack. I sit with my new friend, Sofia. She moved here from far away. "I like apples," I say. "Me too!" says Sofia.



Outside, we run, climb and slide.
We laugh so much! I forget I was
ever nervous.



We learn letters, numbers and listen to a funny story. I also make a big house with blocks. I love story time the best.



At the end of the day,
Mama is waiting for me.

“How was kindergarten?”
she asks.

“Great! I made a friend and
learned a song. I can’t wait
to go back tomorrow!”



Starting kindergarten is an adventure! Like Amira, you'll discover new friends, learn exciting things and feel welcomed every day. Welcome to kindergarten in Ontario!

Kindergarten in Ontario: A quick guide for families

Welcome to Ontario

Starting kindergarten is an exciting milestone for both you and your child. This brochure provides information to help families understand and get to know Ontario's kindergarten program. For more information, please visit ontario.ca/KindergartenReady.

What is kindergarten in Ontario?

Kindergarten is the start of school in Ontario. It is a free 2-year program for 4- and 5-year-old children. It gets your child ready for Grade 1 and sets them up to be successful.

In kindergarten, students gain::

- early reading, writing and math skills
- creativity, problem-solving and social skills

Kindergarten is optional but it's a great way to give your child a strong start.

How do I register my child?

Register at your school in January or February for your child to start school in September. Online registration and interpretation services available. Registration is also possible throughout the school year for newcomers who arrive at any time.

You will need to bring:

- proof of your child's age (birth certificate/passport)
- proof of your address (lease or utility bill)
- your child's immunization records
- your child's baptismal certificate if you are registering in a Catholic school

Immigration status does not affect your child's eligibility.

Find schools near your home, at ontario.ca/FindSchools.

Preparing your child for kindergarten

- Speak positively about school to help your child get excited.
- Establish routines (morning preparation, getting dressed, meals).
- Consider visiting your school before the first day. You can contact the school directly to request a visit.
- Help your child learn to use the toilet, get dressed, and eat on their own.
- Support social skills by encouraging your child to play with other children and join community activities.
- Speak to your child's educators if you have any questions or concerns about your child's school experience.

Language support

- Ask about orientations and language supports for students and their families in school boards.
- Talk to your child's educators about how to support your child learning a new language in class and at home.
- Continue using your home language(s) with your child to support their language development.

Communicating with your school

- Talk to your child's teachers regularly.
- Ask about an interpreter and translation supports.
- Attend meetings and other events held at your school.
- Participate in volunteering opportunities and parent councils.
- Ask about parent resources on school websites.

Practical tips and safety

- Ensure your child attends school regularly and arrives on time.
- Check if you are eligible for school bus transportation or establish safe walking to and from school routines.
- Dress your child in comfortable clothing suitable for the weather and pack extra clothes.
- Learn about your school's policy about food allergens, to protect kids who get sick from certain foods.
- Pack nutritious snacks and lunches that respect this policy (for example, nut-free or peanut-free).

Get extra support

- **Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS)** help families understand school procedures and community resources. They are available through local YMCAs.
- ontario.ca/EarlyON: Find free drop-in programs in your community at EarlyON Child and Family Centres.
- ontario.ca/SpecialEducation: Special Education support services are available for children who require additional help.

Together for your child's future

Ontario schools value your involvement and cultural contributions. Together, we help your child thrive in kindergarten and beyond.

The background is a solid light blue color. It is decorated with numerous white icons of celestial bodies. These include stars of various shapes and sizes: some are simple four-pointed stars, some are five-pointed stars, and one is a large, detailed eight-pointed star in the lower-left quadrant. There are also several crescent moons, with the largest one positioned on the right side of the image. Scattered throughout the background are many small, solid white circles of varying diameters, representing distant stars or galaxies. The overall aesthetic is clean, minimalist, and inspiring.

... reach for the stars!

Welcome to kindergarten!

Experience the magic of the first day of school with Amira. This heartwarming story is perfect for bedtime, story time or anytime! Join Amira as she makes new friends, learns exciting things and has lots of fun on her first day of school.

For more information about kindergarten in Ontario, please visit ontario.ca/KindergartenReady

