

# ages + stages

5 TO 6 ■ 7 TO 9 ■ 10 TO 12



## 5 TO 6 YEARS

### Easy Riders

No matter how excited your child is about starting kindergarten, seeing that big yellow bus pull up can be nerve-racking! To put the brakes on his anxiety—and yours—try these steps, says Marcy Guddemi, Ph.D., of the Gesell Institute of Human Development:

**Take a tour.** Many districts offer orientation for first-time riders, when kids can board a parked school bus, look around, practice using the seat belts, and get their questions answered.

**Brief your child on safety rules.** You can find them—along with some fun activities—at [Americanschoolbuscouncil.org](http://Americanschoolbuscouncil.org).

**Read all about it.** Books that can help your child get mellow about all things wheeled and yellow include *Molly Rides the Bus*, by Julie Brillhart, and *My School Bus: A Book About School Bus Safety*, by Heather Feldman.

**Suss out your stop.** Point out surrounding landmarks so he'll recognize it on his own. Reassure him that an adult will always be there when he gets on and off (most districts require it).

**Buddy up.** Enlist an older sib or a neighbor's kid to stick close by your child and maybe even sit with him those first few days.

**Get in good with the driver.** Help your child learn her name and have him greet her as he boards. A good relationship will put you both at ease, and he'll be less shy about reporting any problems that may occur. —Joanna Nesbit

# 25 million

The number of children who ride school buses each day