

# *Cuban Students Back to School*

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September 1st is a very important day in Cuba because it is the beginning of the new school year and, generally, every family has at least one of its members starting school, in any of its different levels. But also this day, neighbors, relatives, and families join each other to witness the students' procession with their uniforms and backpacks, each one of them excited about the start of the new school year.

Let's pay special attention to the reaction of the youngest ones, those who start preschool. Some of them come from nurseries and others from the Cuban program “Educa a tu Hijo” or “Educate your Child”. I'd like you to meet one them. Christofer Rodriguez Diaz was shy at first but soon he was talking about all the things he had learned.

**“I learned how to count, my vowels and that living creatures are born, they feed, grow and when they get very old they die.”**

He starts school with a lot more confidence. The teacher he had would help the children participate by playing games. She had a box full of different figures and colors where they would have to find the object and the color the teacher asked for; other geometrical figures, living creatures, it is very important for them to learn why they live. They organized activities for the celebration of Teacher's Day as well as Children's Day. They are happy, they know the school, the principal and the environment where they're going to keep developing over the next several years.

UNICEF, the UN Children's Educational Fund praised the Cuban program “Educate your Child” for contributing to the integral development of youngsters and adolescents and also considered it a model for

other countries of the area.

We asked Cristofer how many friends he has at school.

**"A bunch of them! There's Arli, Katerin, Fabio, Patricia..."**

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