

# first grade, first day

**t**hree weeks ago, 6-year-old Christopher Guida drew a picture of himself at school. He drew a stick figure in the middle of a large blank page. But the stick-figure Christopher drew was smiling.

“Cause I get to get away from my idiot brother,” he said with a sly grin.

His mother, Julie, corrected her son for calling Jeffrey an idiot. She explained that the two were best friends and even slept in the same bed at night. Whenever the two of them fought, one would threaten the other that they would not sleep together anymore. But, the second bed always remains vacant.

As Christopher's first day of

first grade at Independence Elementary School grew closer, it was Jeffrey who caused Julie the greatest concern. He had never been separated from his brother for a whole day before.

Secretly, Christopher explained why he was all alone in his picture. He didn't know if any of his friends from kindergarten would have the same teacher. He had other concerns too.

“There might not be enough time to do my work. You have to do more work in first grade. And they might not have my favorite food,” he whispered. “It's pizza.”

Christopher got up at 6:30 a.m. Aug. 27 when he heard his mother's alarm clock. Julie said he crawled into bed with his mom and snuggled under the warm sheets. She stroked his hair lightly until he fell back asleep, then Julie went to take her shower.

It was not the status quo for Christopher, confided Julie. Usually Christopher was up way before her, but it's cloudy. Cloudy days are always lazy days.

Aug. 27 was Christopher's first full day of first grade. The excitement of which was reduced slightly because they met the day before for two hours of school.

First grade is a big transition year – for the whole family.

For Julie, this means that it's Jeffrey's turn for play dates. Usually, Jeffrey played with Christopher's friends or his friends' little brothers while Christopher had the play dates. Now Jeffrey can have a little more undivided attention and his own playmates.

For the students, the transition into first grade is a little easier, said Elaine Steinbeck,