

## Sample First Day of School Letter

Dear Friend,

My name is Madison. I am a kindergartner in Mrs. Seamer's class. I am very excited to learn new things and to meet new friends at Cody!

You may notice that I am a little different than you. I have a disease called spinal muscular atrophy (SMA). There are several types of SMA, all varying in severity. I have the mildest form, SMA type III. I am very lucky that SMA will never affect my brain. My mom and dad did not know that they carried the gene that causes SMA; although one in fifty people do!

My condition doesn't allow me to do some of the things that most kindergartners can do, such as running or jumping. Because of this, I move a little slower on the playground. I can still play ball, draw chalk, swing a jump rope, or chat on the playground, but I need some assistance and patience. I easily fall down and always welcome a helping hand to get back up. If you happen to see me using my wheelchair, it is because my legs get tired easily and I want to save all of my energy for the fun things at school. Even though some things are tricky for me, I still try everything, just in my *own* way.

There are many things that I *can* do. I am like a fish in the water; I love to swim. I love puzzles. I love playing in the pretend kitchen and with dolls. I love to dance! Most of all, I enjoy hanging with my two sisters and friends for play dates. My friends and I enjoy playing barbies, reading books, performing dance and singing shows for whomever will watch.

If you ever have any questions for my parents, please don't hesitate to ask them. They are very open to talking about my disease. You can find out more information about my disease at [www.cureSMA.org](http://www.cureSMA.org).

I am looking forward to a very fun year in kindergarten. I can't wait to find out what makes you **YOU!**

Sincerely,  
Madi 😊