
Preparing Your Child to go Back-to-School

The summer is over! It's time for the kids to go BACK-TO-SCHOOL. This phrase triggers excitement in some children and dread in others. For all parents, it signals the start of an important process – getting your children physically, mentally and emotionally ready to face the rigors and uncertainty of the school year and adjusting their routine to the hectic pace of Fall from the lazy days of Summer.

Whether you are getting your student ready for his first day or another year, experts say that with a little planning, patience and scheduling, you can relieve a lot of back-to-school anxiety. Getting organized helps to keep last minute headaches to a minimum and increases your child's chances for successful adjustment and a successful school year.

A Month Before School Begins

- With your child, make a list of all the items your child will need to be prepared for school. When making purchases, let your child have some say.
- Contact other parents and arrange car-pools for school drop-offs and pickups as well as after school activities.
- Make sure that your child is physically prepared for school. Vision and hearing exams, or at the very least, annual physicals, are key elements of making sure your child is prepared to learn.

A Week Before School Begins

- Re-establish guidelines and routines in the days leading up to the first day of school. Ease into the school year routine by limiting television, video games and light night meals. Earlier bedtimes and getting up at the same time every day brings more structure and discipline into your child's day.
- Become familiar with the bus routine. Take a practice run along the bus route so that your child can see how long it takes to get to school and to familiarize him with the sights and sounds that he will encounter on the route.
- Take a school tour.
- Learn and practice safety measures.

The Day Before School Starts

- Select outfits the night before. Have your child select outfits for the first week of school. Knowing what he is wearing helps him start off each morning on a calm, predictable note.
- Pack backpacks and lunches the night before. Children get anxious about forgetting their books, school supplies, lunch and other items they need at school. Establish a routine that requires your child to pack his book bag every night before he goes to bed. This ensures that he will not have to rush in the morning trying to locate stray items.

On the First Day of School

- If it is your child's first day of school, take the first morning off work so that you can see him off to school personally.



Once School Has Begun

- Set a routine each evening for sharing of daytime stories, both student's and parent's and review any Parent-Teacher correspondence. This will help avoid the last minute "My teacher said that I have to bring..."

Requests in the morning.

- Foster independence in learning and a feeling of self-reliance and self confidence.
- Together with your child, decide the place (preferably a place with limited amount of background noise) and the standard time that your child will do homework.
- Always reward a positive effort and attitude, completion of homework, and good grades.
- Find out who your child's classmates and friends are and get to know their parents.
- Always encourage learning by promoting extra-curricular reading and the pursuit of interests outside of the classroom.

Get organized and have a great school year!