



STRENGTHENING FAMILIES

Back-to-School Transition



START EARLY...

Talk to your children about the end-of-summer back-to-school transition approaching.

It's important for children's bodies to readjust to the school schedule after late nights of summer fun. About one or two weeks before school begins, start making bedtime 10 minutes earlier each night until you're at your desired "school bedtime."

Establish nighttime school routines, such as checking backpacks and picking out clothes the night before.

Talk about expectations for the morning.

MAKE IT FUN AND GET EVERYONE EXCITED!

Celebrating the joy of summer and counting down to back-to-school is something fun for everyone.

Celebrate the end of summer each day by having a school supply scavenger hunt, enjoying an end-of-summer BBQ, and making a summer scrapbook.

Counting down the last two weeks of summer on a calendar can be a fun way to both celebrate and prepare.

Have a fashion show to see if clothes still fit, what needs to be purchased, etc.



KEEP THE KIDS INVOLVED

Together, work on a school calendar, and pick out a new backpack or lunch box.

MAKE TIME TO SPEND ONE-ON-ONE TIME WITH YOUR CHILD

Take 15-30 minutes every day to do a project or play a game with your child, especially if you have more than one. Make a plan so each kid can have your undivided attention for a few minutes daily.

RECONNECT WITH LEARNING

It's important to not dwell on the academic struggles from years past. This can increase anxiety and decrease your child's confidence and excitement about the new school year.

Pick out some new books to read together.

Give your student a chance to pick out school supplies that reflect his/her personality and make learning fun.



STAY POSITIVE

Like with many things, your child will look to you for clues on how they should feel about returning to school. If you seem anxious, they will probably pick up on it.

Be sensitive to your child's fears and remind them of the aspects of school they enjoy.

Be prepared: if you know your child is going to be nervous, practice strategies they can use at school – such as getting a drink of water, or having a special item they can put in their pocket or cubby. Make the teacher(s) aware your child is nervous and has an item from home.



TAKE A TRIP TO THE SCHOOL

The school is open to having students come visit before the new year starts, to get the lay of the land.

Meet your child's new teachers, and connect with support staff and other people around the building your student has positive relationships with.

Practice the morning routine and come up to the school.

Make an after-school plan for the first few days after the new year starts. Children feel safe and confident when they know what to expect.



HEALTHY EATING

Summer is often filled with chips, ice cream, and snacking throughout the day.

Reintroduce structured snack times with healthy options.

Still a great time to eat fresh fruits and vegetables!

Try to have summer lunch time close to when your child will eat lunch at school.

If you need help with healthy snacks, talk to school support staff or your child's teacher.

RECONNECTING WITH FRIENDS

Try to have your child reconnect with friends they haven't seen over the summer.

Reach out to friends to see which teacher they are assigned to.

Take a trip to the playground to meet and play.

Get your kids outside playing – it's often easy to get stuck in front of the TV or electronics.

SCREEN TIME

Limit to two hours a day, including TV, tablet, phones, and video games.

Supervise your child to ensure they are doing appropriate activities.

Create rules and expectations for electronic use – for example, he/she has to ask to use electronics, adhere to an established length of time, and use passwords.

Give reminders or warnings when time is close to being up.

Encourage the use of educational materials.

To help them wind down, children (and adults!) should not have any screen time an hour before bed.