

Tips for Back to School

By Katrina Newman M.A., B.C.B.A., L.B.A.

Some homework that parents can do to prepare for a successful school year:

1. Check in with pediatrician to make sure vaccinations are up to date and eyesight/hearing is checked. You can also list your child's weight and height on a safety card.
2. Make sure your kids are aware of the guidelines in the parking lot, playground and hallways to ensure safety.
3. Practice the bedtime and wake-up routine to prepare your child for the upcoming schedule.
4. Create a folder for notes and permission slips so everyone knows where to find them.
5. Set up a homework station at home with school supplies such as: pencils, glue, scissors, erasers, markers, crayons, construction paper, and a white board with dry erase markers.
6. Decide on a meal plan. Meat, eggs, cheese and seed/nut butters are a great source of protein to add to veggies and fruit.
7. Pick up school supplies and sports equipment. Did you know many secondhand stores (Like Once Upon A Child and Goodwill) sell cleats and helmets?
8. Make sure your kids know where to put shoes, sweaters, backpacks and permission slips/notes home. Practicing the exit and entry routine will make it run smoothly that first week of school. A good tip is to tell kids to meet you on the entry rug when they are ready with shoes and bags.
9. Visit the classroom and meet the teacher. Knowing the teacher's face and name ahead of time can calm nerves.
10. Check in with your child about their feelings about the upcoming school year. Are they anxious, excited, worried? The library is a great resource for books on the upcoming school year.

What can the kids do?

- *Sleep*
 - It takes about 2-3 weeks to get used to a change in sleep schedule. Make sure to practice going to bed and getting up a little earlier.
- *Transitions*
 - Practice transitioning from one activity to the next by setting a timer and giving a one- or two-minute warning before moving to the next activity. This can help kiddos to start thinking about those classroom transitions from one subject to the next.
- *Social-emotional regulation*
 - Practicing calm down strategies before a kid gets upset can help them when a situation occurs at school. Have your child squeeze their muscles tightly and then release them. They can trace their fingers and breathe in while tracing up and breathe out while tracing down. This is referred to as wave breathing or five finger breathing.

Recommended books:

