

Ready, Set, Go! Getting Ready for a New School Year

With the new school year approaching you may already be out shopping for school supplies or simply enjoying the “last licks” of the summer. For children and parents, transitioning from summer to the start of school may be difficult. Parents can help with this transition by planning, being realistic, and maintaining a positive attitude. Here are some suggestions to help ease the transition and promote a successful school experience.

- 📖 *Good physical health.* Be sure your child is in good physical health. Remember to schedule doctor and dental checkups early. Your child will benefit if you can identify and begin addressing any potential issue before school starts.
- 📖 *Review information.* Review any materials sent by the school as soon as it arrives.
- 📖 *Mark your calendar.* Make to sure to note important dates. This is especially important if you have children in more than one school and need to juggle obligations.
- 📖 *Buy school supplies early.* Try to get the supplies as early as possible and fill the backpacks a week before school starts. Older children can help do this, but make sure they use a checklist that you can review.
- 📖 *Re-establish the bedtime and mealtime routines.* Plan to re-establish the bedtime and mealtime routines (especially breakfast) at least 1 week before school starts. Discuss with your child the benefits of routines in terms of not becoming over tired or overwhelmed by school work and activities.
- 📖 *Visit school with your child.* If your child is young or in a new school, visit the school with your child. This can help ease pre-school anxieties and also allow your child to ask questions about the new environment.
- 📖 *Designate and clear a place to do homework.* Older children should have the option of studying in their room or a quiet area of the house. Younger children usually need an area set aside in the family room or kitchen to facilitate adult monitoring, supervision, and encouragement.
- 📖 *Select a spot to keep backpacks and lunch boxes.* Designate a spot for your children to place their school belongings as well as a place to put important notices and information sent home for you to see. Explain that emptying their backpack each evening is part of their responsibility, even for young children.
- 📖 *Freeze a few easy dinners.* It will be much easier on you if you have dinner prepared so that meal preparation will not add to household tensions during the first week of school.

By: Favia Becker, M.A., Psy. S. School Psychologist, Lakewood City Schools. Adapted from: Back-to-School Transitions: Tips for Parents by Ted Feinberg, EdD, NCSP, & Katherine C. Cowan, National Association of School Psychologists