

Transition Timeline

Life doesn't stop so that you can do all the things you need to do to be ready for the return to school. Use this timeline to help you stay on track.

1-2 weeks before the start of school

- Gradually restart school routines – bed/wake times, screentime rules, family meals.
- Complete shopping for supplies and a few items of clothing with your child.
- Establish a family calendar in a format you will use and that everyone has access to.
- Decide how/where to manage school paperwork.
- Work with your family to set up a homework zone and a staging area.
- Watch for communications from the school. Get important dates on your calendar right away.
- Make and freeze a few dinners to take the pressure off during the first week back to school.
- Arrange get-togethers to help your child reconnect with school friends.
- Attend school open house/orientation events with your child. If this is not offered, make arrangements to tour the school and meet the teacher.
- Talk with your child about any worries. Problem-solve together to come up with strategies.
- Check out the bus stop or do a dry run of the walking route. Review transportation safety. The [National Safety Council – Back-to-School Safety Checklist](#) has tips to review for walkers, bus and bike riders, young drivers, and more.
- Review rules and role-play situations if your child will be home alone after school.

The night before the first day

- Go over strategies you talked about for trouble spots as needed but focus on and end the conversation with positives. (Do this earlier, not right before bed.)
- Ask them to name three things that they are excited about for tomorrow.
- Talk about what they want to wear and what they would like for lunch.
- Check backpack to confirm they have all forms, supplies, bus number, and contact information.

The big day!

Share a sense of excitement and enthusiasm with your child. Remind them that everyone gets a nervous feeling when they start something new. Give them a hug, and tell them you are excited for them and confident that they will manage.

More ideas?

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