

Tips To Kick Off A Successful School Year

Stay Positive: a parent's attitude has a strong influence on how children view the beginning of school. Children like to hear about their parents' own experiences in school. Share some school childhood memories with them. It is also helpful to share a time where a negative turned into a positive (ex. I was nervous for school but I decided to smile at the girl in the row next to me. Later, she asked what my name was, and we became instant friends). Positive language is also important through the transition process back to school (ex. Instead of saying "If you make friends this week, say when you make friends this week)."

Sleep Pattern: Children between the ages of 5-12 need 10-11 hours of sleep. It is important that your child has a regular bedtime and wake-up routine. Try this routine before school starts to reduce any anxiety about waking-up on time for their first day of school.

Family & Mental Walk Through: Children seeing their classroom before school starts can help with the transition from home to school. If a tour can not be arranged beforehand, a map can be used or a mental walk through. It is important for your children to be familiar with the main areas of the school (ex. gym, office, and library). Remind your child that the first week of school and beyond that adults are always around to help if they forget where their classroom is at.

Talk: Have your children ask you any questions they may have about school. This will help them to feel more relaxed. When they come home ask specific questions about their day ("How was the math test?", "Did you talk to your friends today?")

Create Routines: Children thrive with daily routines. It is important to establish home routines in association with school as quickly as possible. Routines at home can directly influence their routines at school. Modeling exactly what is expected with your children can be helpful. A routine should be created for before and after school (ex. getting dressed, breakfast, snack, homework, sports, etc.)

Communication: it is important to contact your child's teacher and/or counselor if you have any concerns with them academically, socially, and/or emotionally. Also remember to notify the school of any important events/changes that may affect your child's temperament that day. Constant communication is crucial for a successful year.

Check-ins: Make sure throughout the year that everything is OK. Look for verbal and nonverbal signs from your child. If you notice a change in their mood, sleep pattern, or eating, ask them if anything is bothering them.

Reminders: Remind your child that this a fresh start and a new year. Anything that may have happened before, does not matter as much as what is to be. Their slate is clean and how the new year goes is based on their future choices.

-Article taken from school & family.com and scholastic.com-