

5 Back to School Tips for Parents

It's almost that time of year again. Believe it or not, your kids will be heading back to school in the near future. You can almost taste it! But making the transition from summer to fall means that you'd better think ahead. There are a lot of changes that must be managed. Here are five back to school tips to help you and your kids make the shift as easy as possible.

1. Bedtime

Gradually start getting the children to bed earlier and earlier, so that one week before school starts, they are on their fall schedule. Once school begins, bedtime should be the same every night. Weekend times for bed, of course, can still be a little different from the rest of the week.



2. Homework

If you have youngsters who handle homework on their own (yes, there are children like this), leave them alone or say something like: "Boy, you really did a good job last year doing your schoolwork by yourself." With other children, sit them down and discuss how homework will be handled every day. Good rules of thumb are same time, same place and try to get it all done before dinner. TV is not allowed while doing schoolwork, but many kids do better while listening to music.

3. New Schools

If you have a child who is going to a school they haven't been to before, make sure you take them over for a visit. Take them to their new classroom and—even better—see if you can meet their new teacher. Even if you can't, try to find at least one friendly person in the school that your child can talk to for even a little bit. Your visit—and that friendly memory—will help to counter some of your child's fears of the unknown.

4. School Supplies

Make a fun shopping trip out of buying school supplies. One-on-one shared fun is the best parent-child bonding method in history. That means ONE child plus you go shopping and to lunch, not THREE kids plus you. Kids cherish being alone with a parent, and for you the pleasure is partly due to the fact that sibling rivalry in this situation is impossible.

5. Listen and Talk.

While you're out getting things for school, or anytime really, be a sympathetic listener. Ask your child how it feels to be going back to school. "What's good about it and what's not so hot." Then, from time to time, fill your young one in on what it felt like for you to be going back to school at about her age. Don't be scared—be honest.