

7 Strategies for New School Year Success

With summer winding down, the new school year begins. Here are some tips and activities to ease kids' transition back to the classroom and to help prepare them for success in the new school year.

- 1. Get student records organized:** Before the school year ramps up, try to schedule whatever medical appointments may be needed. Schools can require documentation of up-to-date immunizations, so check on your state's vaccine requirements.
- 2. Remember to read:** While summer may have meant a more relaxed routine, try to set aside time to read with your kids. At this time of the year, your local public library likely has a display of back-to-school themed books, including children's picture books, children's chapter books, and young adult novels. Pick one off the shelf or ask the librarian for some suggestions. For a change of pace, online learning games may promote reading skills that your child can apply in all subject areas.
- 3. Be there to ease transitions:** Starting a new school or moving from one grade to the next, for example, moving from elementary to middle school, can mean adjustments for kids—new route to school, new schedule, or new classmates. Try to assist in the transition by visiting the school with younger kids before classes start, maintaining routines at home for a sense of a familiar environment, or attending any parent orientation the school provides. Keep the lines of communication open and listen to your child.
- 4. Support homework:** Show kids that homework is a priority. Establishing a standard time and maintaining a schedule can help. Determine a routine place for your child to do homework—a desk or the kitchen table. Try to keep it uncluttered, but have supplies they may need, like pencils, a ruler, and scissors handy in a drawer or a basket. There is an abundance of online resources available today to help kids with their schoolwork. Many sites enrich and personalize your kid's experience and numerous information sources can aid in students' comprehension. Get online with your child and find libraries at the local, state, and federal levels in your area that may help kids with school projects.
- 5. Pack nutritious lunches and snacks:** Following dietary guidelines can help ensure your child has the proper nutrition to perform well in school. Promote a healthy, active lifestyle by encouraging kids to help with packing their lunch or trying a new recipe with nutritious ingredients.
- 6. Stay active:** With the return of school can come more time spent indoors, but don't forget to keep physical activity a part of the daily schedule. Encourage the whole family to get moving for 60 minutes a day. Play tag in your yard or neighborhood park, for example. Staying active and getting the wiggles out can help your child focus on homework and relieve stress.
- 7. Try a new extracurricular activity:** Afterschool programs are a way for kids to form new friendships, develop teamwork skills, and improve academic proficiencies. Look into programs that may be offered at your child's school, or your local community center may have activities that could help your child explore a new hobby or discover a new passion. Is he interested in music, theater, or soccer? Is she curious about chess, robots, or world languages?



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