



## **Parenting Tips: Back to School**

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### **Infants: 0 to 12 months**

1. Each night, prepare your child's bag with his/her clothes and other supplies that he/she will need at daycare the next day.
2. Have your child's vaccination record ready for the first day of daycare or for whenever it is requested.
3. Establish and follow a guideline for waking your child at a specific hour in the morning and putting him/her to bed at a specific time each evening.
4. In the car, your child should ride in the backseat, in her/his car seat.
5. Discuss any details of your child's diet/feeding with his/her teacher.
6. Discuss any allergies that your child may have with the teacher.
7. Do not take your child to daycare when she/he is sick or has a fever.
8. Each day when picking your child up, check in with the teacher about how the day went and how your child has been.
9. Get to know your child's teacher(s) and stay in regular communication with the daycare center.

### **Toddlers: 1 to 2 years**

1. Each night, prepare your child's bag with his/her clothes and other supplies that he/she will need at daycare the next day.
2. Have your child's vaccination record ready for the first day of daycare or for whenever it is requested.
3. Establish and follow a guideline for waking your child at a specific hour in the morning and putting him/her to bed at a specific time each evening.
4. In the car, your child should ride in the backseat, in her/his car seat.
5. Discuss any details of your child's diet/feeding with his/her teacher.
6. Discuss any allergies that your child may have with the teacher.
7. Do not take your child to daycare when she/he is sick or has a fever.
8. Each day when picking your child up, check in with the teacher about how the day went and how your child has been.
9. Consider establishing a comforting ritual (for example, three kisses and wave) that you and your child use each day when you drop her/him off at daycare.
10. Get to know your child's teacher(s) and stay in regular communication with the daycare center.

### **Preschoolers: 3 to 5 years**

1. Prepare your child for the new routine of going to bed and getting up earlier. Establish and follow a guideline for waking your child at a specific hour in the morning and putting him/her to bed at a specific time each evening.
2. Have your child's vaccination record ready for the first day of school or for whenever it is requested.
3. Help your child prepare all of the things he/she will need for school the night before.
4. Discuss any allergies that your child may have with the teacher.
5. Choose a backpack with wide, cushioned straps, and a cushioned back. Pack it lightly – no more than 10 to 20% of your child's weight. Teach your child to use both straps. Consider a backpack with wheels.
6. Remind your child of the positive aspects of starting a new school year – for example, he or she will have fun.
7. In the car, all passengers should use a seatbelt and/or a car seat or booster seat, as appropriate for their age and size.
8. Consider establishing a comforting ritual (for example, three kisses and wave) that you and your child use each day when you drop her/him off at school.
9. Get to know your child's teacher(s) and stay in regular communication with the school.

### **School Age: 6 to 8 years**

1. Prepare your child for the new routine of going to bed and getting up earlier. Establish and follow a guideline for waking your child at a specific hour in the morning and going to bed at a specific time each night.
2. Help your child prepare all of the things he/she will need for school the night before.
3. Choose a backpack with wide, cushioned straps, and a cushioned back. Pack it lightly – no more than 10 to 20% of your child's weight. Teach your child to use both straps. Consider a backpack with wheels.
4. Reassure your child that it's normal for him/her to be a bit anxious the first day of school. Remind him that the teachers and other children also feel this way, but that this will soon pass.
5. Remind your child of the positive aspects of starting a new school year – for example, she or he will have fun. She or he will see her/his old friends and make new ones. Remind your child of positive memories from previous school years.
6. Find another child in the neighborhood with whom your child can ride the school bus.
7. If you find it appropriate, take your child to school and pick him/her up on the first day (on foot or in the car), even if he/she will normally ride the bus.
8. Speak with your child about the rules for riding the school bus – for example, using the seatbelt if there is one, waiting until the bus comes to a complete stop, staying seated inside the bus, remaining within view of the bus driver.
9. Speak with your child about the household rules/procedures for homework time.

10. Create an appropriate environment for doing homework. Children need a permanent work area in their room or in another quiet part of the house.
11. Establish a rule for your home that the TV is off during homework time.
12. Be available to answer questions and help your child, but never do his/her homework for him/her.
13. Teach your child how to relieve tiredness in her/his eyes, neck, and mind while studying. It can be helpful to close one's books for a few minutes, stretch, and give oneself a rest periodically when it won't be a big interruption.
14. If your child is having trouble with a particular subject area in which you cannot help her/him much, a tutor could be helpful. First, speak with your child's teacher.
15. Get to know your child's teacher(s) and stay in regular communication with the school.

### **School Age: 9 to 12 years**

1. Prepare your child for the new routine of going to bed and getting up earlier. Establish and follow a guideline for waking your child at a specific hour in the morning and going to bed at a specific time each night.
2. Help your child prepare all of the things he/she will need for school the night before.
3. Choose a backpack with wide, cushioned straps, and a cushioned back. Pack it lightly – no more than 10 to 20% of your child's weight. Teach your child to use both straps. Consider a backpack with wheels.
4. Tell your child that it's normal for him/her to be a bit anxious the first day of school. Remind him that the teachers and other children also feel this way, but that this will soon pass.
5. Remind your child of the positive aspects of starting a new school year – for example, she or he will have fun. She or he will see her/his old friends and make new ones. Remind your child of positive memories from previous school years.
6. Find another child in the neighborhood with whom your child can ride the school bus.
7. If you find it appropriate, take your child to school and pick him/her up on the first day (on foot or in the car), even if he/she will normally ride the school bus.
8. Speak with your child about the rules for riding the school bus – for example, using the seatbelt if there is one, waiting until the bus comes to a complete stop, staying seated inside the bus, remaining within view of the bus driver.
9. Speak with your child about the household rules/procedures for homework time.
10. Create an appropriate environment for doing homework. Children need a permanent work area in their room or in another quiet part of the house.
11. Establish a rule for your home that the TV is off during homework time.
12. Supervise the use of the computer and Internet.
13. Be available to answer questions and help your child, but never do his/her homework for him/her.

14. Teach your child how to relieve tiredness in her/his eyes, neck, and mind while studying. It can be helpful to close one's books for a few minutes, stretch, and give oneself a rest periodically when it won't be a big interruption.
15. If your child is having trouble with a particular subject area in which you cannot help her/him much, a tutor could be helpful. First, speak with your child's teacher.
16. Get to know your child(s) teachers and stay in regular communication with the school.
17. Children age 10 and up may generally stay home alone no longer than 2 to 3 hours in the late afternoon/early evening. Be mindful of your child's development in determining whether he/she may stay home alone.
18. If children are home alone after school, make sure they have access to the following phone numbers: your contact number(s), number(s) for a neighbor/friend/relative they can contact, and emergency contact number(s).
19. Children of this age group who are home alone should not babysit younger siblings.
20. Prepare food in advance for children who are home alone, so they don't need to use the stove or other kitchen equipment.
21. If children are to be home alone after school, prepare a safety plan with them, and make sure they know the guidelines for safety and behavior while home alone.

### **Adolescents: 13 years and older**

1. Prepare your child for the new routine of going to bed and getting up earlier. Establish and follow a guideline for assist your child in getting to bed and getting up at the same time each day.
2. Remind your child to prepare all of the things he/she will need for school the night before.
3. Choose a backpack with wide, cushioned straps, and a cushioned back. Pack it lightly – no more than 10 to 20% of your child's weight. Teach your child to use both straps. Consider a backpack with wheels.
4. Speak with your child about the household rules/procedures for homework time.
5. Create an appropriate environment for doing homework. Children need a permanent work area in their room or in another quiet part of the house.
6. Establish a rule for your home that the TV is off during homework time.
7. Supervise the use of the computer and Internet.
8. Be available to answer questions and help your child, but never do his/her homework for him/her.
9. Teach your child how to relieve tiredness in her/his eyes, neck, and mind while studying. It can be helpful to close one's books for a few minutes, stretch, and give oneself a rest periodically when it won't be a big interruption.
10. If your child is having trouble with a particular subject area in which you cannot help her/him much, a tutor could be helpful. First, speak with your child's teacher.

11. Remember that many car accidents occur when teenage drivers are going between home and school. Remind your teenagers to use seatbelts. Limit the number of passengers that they may have in the car with them, and don't allow eating or drinking in the car, or talking on a cell phone or texting, so as to avoid distractions for the driver. Also limit teenagers driving at night and in extreme weather. Consider creating a "Parent-Teen Driving Agreement" for your household.
12. Get to know your child(s) teachers and stay in regular communication with the school.
13. Adolescents may generally stay home alone for a few hours in the late afternoon/early evening. Be mindful of your child's development in determining whether he/she may stay home alone.
14. If children are home alone after school, make sure they have access to the following phone numbers: your contact number(s), number(s) for a neighbor/friend/relative they can contact, and emergency contact number(s).
15. Adolescents approximately 14 and older may be able to babysit 1 to 2 younger siblings (no infants) for up to about 3 hours during daylight and early evening hours only. If your adolescent has homework, however, babysitting younger siblings is likely to interfere with his or her time to complete it, so it is advisable to make other arrangements for siblings. Also take your child's development under consideration when determining if she/he may care for younger siblings.
16. Prepare food in advance for children who are home alone, so they don't need to use the stove or other kitchen equipment.
17. If children are to be home alone after school, prepare a safety plan with them, and make sure they know the guidelines for safety and behavior while home alone.