

# Making Back to School Fun

Parents, rejoice! Summer is over and it's time to send the kids back to school. While you may be dancing a jig, chances are your children may be a little more glum. Here are some ways to cheer them up and make going back to school easier.

## ESTABLISH TRADITIONS

Start your own back-to-school traditions like a special first-day breakfast or picture to get the year started on a good foot. You can also break out balloons or other special gifts to get the kids going and ease the jitters on the first day. If you can, spend extra time helping them get ready; maybe with a new hairstyle or a new backpack to make the day fun.

## TAKE A HOLIDAY

Pack the weekend before school starts with your child's favorite activities. Hit the park, the beach, go camping, anything to take their mind off the looming start of school and end the summer with a bang. Just make sure you're back home in time for them to start the year with plenty of rest.

## GET ON THE GOOD FOOT

It may seem like common sense, but with summer coming to a close and everything that entails, it might be hard to remember. Make sure your kids get plenty of rest and a good, healthy breakfast before they head out of the door on the first day of school. Have them lay their stuff out the night before so there's no last-minute scramble.

## STARTING A NEW SCHOOL

If your child's starting a new school for the first time, there are going to be some extra jitters on that first day. But there are some things you can do to take the sting out. If you can, try to tour the school before the first day so she's familiar with the layout, if nothing else. Meet her new teachers and, if possible, make some connections with kids her age that go there.

Remember that while it may seem trivial to our adult problems, the first day of school is a huge event in your child's life. Keep lines of communication open and give them plenty of love during the first couple of weeks. Give them time to process their feelings and encourage them to talk to you about it. Listen to your children and take their feelings seriously, even if their missing favorite pencil pales in comparison to what you deal with every day.

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