



AUGUST 11TH - 29TH, 2020

Getting Kids Ready for an Uncertain Year

Let's Review





TIP #1

START EARLY

Start preparations earlier than usual this year.

Be open and honest with your children, at a level appropriate for their age, about what is known and unknown about the upcoming school year.

If you are a teacher, as soon as possible, take pictures and/or video of some of the changes children can expect.





TIP #2

ASK QUESTIONS

Ask your child questions and talk through their responses. Instead of asking, "What are you worried about for school this year?" try asking, "What do you think school will be like this year?"

If your child expresses concerns about a specific aspect of the school year, talk through this with them and don't discount their worries.

Make it clear that you are there to support them and help them through any challenges.





TIP #3

DISCUSS CHANGES

Read your school division's plan & discuss likely (or confirmed) changes and problem-solve with your kids how that will impact them and what they can do to make it easier.

For younger children, this might be talking through lunch-time routines or bathroom breaks.

For older children, this might include discussions regarding lost extracurricular activities and how to keep track of assignments online





TIP #4

MODEL APPROPRIATE COPING SKILLS &/OR CREATE A CALMING KIT

Kids look to trusted adults to know how to react in uncertain situations. If parents show that they are not coping well with school changes this year, children are more likely to be upset as well.

Take some time to share strategies and tools that work for you. From there, create a calming kit full of tools that can help your child learn to calm & focus.





TIP #5

PRACTICE NEW PROCEDURES AT HOME

Practice new procedures at home and help children become comfortable BEFORE the school year starts. Start giving air high-fives, use hand sanitizer before lunch, eat lunch from their lunch kits, have children practice wearing masks for short times at home and gradually increase the time that they are wearing them.

If children are engaging in online learning, have children practice logging on to the computer and navigate to the site they need or something similar. Schedule video calls with family and friends to get them use to having having conversations on the screen if they aren't quite ready.





TIP #6

START GETTING INTO ROUTINE NOW

Start establishing consistent sleep and wake times now. Typically one adjusts a sleep routine by 15 minutes/week.

Have structured and unstructured parts of the day and begin to eat snacks & lunch at the same time as school

Start having your child wear masks to do activities at home, such as art projects, reading, or parts of playtime. Normalize the changes by reminding them that all of their classmates are experiences the same changes. ,





TIP #7

REACH OUT & TALK TO SOMEONE

If you have specific concerns for your child, reach out to the school and discuss your concerns. Ask about school-specific or community-specific resources that might be available to help your child.





TIP #8

PLAN FOR SEPARATION ANXIETY

Since families have been spending more time together due to COVID-19 restrictions, young children may have increased separation anxiety or general stress and concerns about being away from family and being in a new environment with new people.

For younger children, start practicing being apart. As you practice, consider creating a special goodbye part of your routine that you can do together, such as a special handshake or statement that you and your child make to one another. Also remind your child when you will see them again.

Some children also benefit from a transitional object, like a small object that reminds them of you while you are separated and that they can "keep safe" while apart. For younger children, practice short separations at home while a parent goes for a walk or runs errands. If safe to do so, you may also consider a sleepover at a grandparent's house.





TIP #9

WHEN TO SEEK HELP

It is natural for the beginning of the school-year to be stressful for kids (and parents!) of ALL ages.

It typically takes a few weeks of adjustment before kids are used to their new routines and schedules.

If you notice significant changes in your child's behaviour, such as sleep problems, major appetite changes, behaviour or mood changes, or anxiety that makes it hard for them to function, seek advice from your child's teacher or doctor.





TIP #10

REMEMBER TO BREATHE

Our last post focused on one of the most important things educators, parents and students can do right now.

It may seem seem simple. But when things get complex, we often forget the simple things.

We want everyone to remember to breathe.

This upcoming school year is uncertain. This upcoming school year is stressful. However, when the stress starts to grow....please remember to take a moment and breathe. We will get through this together.

