

BE PREPARED WITH SCHOOL MATERIALS

1. Make sure to stock up on paper, folders, pens, pencils, markers, crayons, etc.
2. Shop ahead of time for sales throughout the year
3. Buy extras of "essentials" and put them away for later
4. Take advantage of the back-to-school sales to start stocking up or buy off-brands whenever possible to cut costs
5. Take an inventory before heading out to the stores
6. Shop with a list to avoid buying things you don't need
7. On or before the first day of school, make sure you or your child finds out what school supplies and materials are required.

CLEARING OUT THE CLUTTER

1. Go through closets and give away clothes / shoes that don't fit
2. Help your kids let go of old toys and outdated interests
3. Clean out old school supplies to make room for the new
4. Spend one day before school starts organizing your child's storage
5. Do it "with" your kids, and not "for" them
6. Have each child's room spotless by the night before school starts

CONTACT THE SCHOOL

1. Find out if any physical examinations or immunizations required
2. See if any new registration requirements this year
3. Get your child's schedule and names of teachers
4. Names and contact info for your child's classmates' parents
5. Give school emergency phone numbers to reach you
6. Designate others who may care for your child in your absence
7. Get copy of school policies (absence, illness, discipline, etc.)
8. Go over school rules with your child.
9. If you have medical concerns, make sure to meet with the secretary prior to the first day, especially if medicine must be given at school.

CREATING A LAUNCHING PAD

1. Set up a spot near the door for items that need to go to school: Backpacks, school books, sports equipment, instruments, etc.
2. Spend 15 minutes each night gathering supplies for tomorrow
3. Use a cubby for each kid if you have several children and no more hunting for missing books and supplies in the morning
4. Get a couple of rolls of quarters and dimes. Put them in the cabinet so you don't have to hunt for change for milk at the last minute.

GETTING READY AHEAD OF TIME

1. Make lunches the night before to save time in the morning
2. Do "non-perishables" (juice box, chips, fruit) a week at a time and put lunch bags in pantry labeled with child's name and day
3. Lay out your child's clothes for the entire week on Sat. or Sun.
4. Simplify your child's wardrobe to "mix-and-match"
5. Plan out and shop for a week's worth of dinners at once
6. Label, Label, Label — All items that will be taken to school or worn and taken off at school! Also place a label inside a lunchbox with your child's information on it. Include your child's name, address, phone number, and any other important contact information.
7. Take some time before the start of school to make sure you and your child know where to go and what to do on that first morning. If your child walks, map out the safest route to school. Warn your child to always walk with a friend and scout out safe houses to go to in case of emergency.
8. Reading books together about school is a good way to establish the reading habit and to start conversations about school excitement and fears.

9. As the first day draws near, begin talking to your child about expectations, hopes and fears for the upcoming school year. Reassure her that other children are having the same feelings and that she's sure to have a great year. Present school as a place where she'll learn new things and make friends.
10. Make sure to arrange before/after school daycare!

MAKING BEDTIME EASIER

1. Have a set schedule (homework, dinner, play, bath, etc.)
2. Spend 15 minutes before bed straightening up
3. Create "calming" rituals (bath, reading, soft music) before bed
4. Help kids get up in time by insisting on a strict bedtime
5. Stay away from TV late at night
6. Make a list of rules and adjustments for school days: homework schedule, TV schedule, bath time, bed time etc...

MORNING RITUALS

1. Set an alarm clock allowing plenty of time to get ready
2. Complete your AM routine before the kids start to get going
3. Simplify your morning routine as much as possible
4. Complete as many "getting ready" chores the night before as can
5. Have a set schedule (shower, dress, breakfast, chores, etc.)
6. Make mornings fun with music, but stay away from TV distractions
7. Create a sense of structure to start off the day
8. Put breakfast supplies within kids' reach to make things easier
9. develop consequences for not being ready on time
10. Encourage your child to eat a good breakfast and pack a healthy lunch to help her get through the day.
11. If your child has enjoyed a vacation of late nights and lazy mornings, getting him up for school on the first day can be difficult. Help make this transition easier by starting his school-year sleep routine a week or two in advance.

PUTTING YOUR SCHEDULE IN ORDER

1. Set up a central family calendar in a high-traffic area
2. Family meeting once a week to discuss each person's schedule
3. Record each person's appointments in a different color marker
4. Make each child responsible for reporting his / her activities
5. Schedule in regular appointments (soccer practice, piano lessons)
6. Immediately transfer dates from other schedules to your calendar
7. Be sure to block off family time at least once a week
8. Make a calendar to place in a visible spot and fill in events and school vacation days

TEACHING KIDS TO SET BOUNDARIES

1. Limit the number of extra-curricular activities at one time
2. Limit amount of artwork that may be displayed at one time
3. When a new piece of artwork goes up, one must come down