



Help Children ease into new school environment

Heading back to school after a long, relaxing summer requires preparation. For those who are beginning their first year at a new school, continued monitoring can help children adapt to new routines more quickly.

During the first few weeks, teachers generally conduct informal assessments, which can help parents determine how their children are adjusting academically and socially.

The following tips from the American Academy of Pediatrics can help ease children through the transition to a new school environment:

- Remind your child that he or she is not the only student who is uneasy about starting a new school year. Point out the positives, including that he or she will meet new friends. Talk about the interesting things he or she will learn in the months ahead.
- Reassure your child that if any problems arise at school, you will help resolve them.
- Find out what activities are available for your child in addition to those that occur during school and encourage your child to get involved.
- Make sure the trip to and from school is a safe one. Whether your child rides the bus, walks or bikes to school, try to ensure your child is accompanied by a friend. Bicycle riders should always wear a helmet and know the rules of the road.
- Monitor and review any chronic conditions, food allergies and special needs in the first weeks of school with your child and the school. Getting off on the right foot can ensure proper response in an emergency. Schools should have a copy of the child's health plan and parental consent for medical treatment in a signed release form. Parent-teacher conferences can uncover any issues surrounding the effects of your child's chronic conditions on his or her schoolwork.
- After school, show your child some special attention and affection. Give him or her a hug and ask what happened at school. Talk with your child about his or her new routine. School avoidance can be a sign that the child is being bullied or is facing other issues.

-Trisha Koriath
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