

BACK TO SCHOOL TIPS FOR YOUNG FAMILIES

VICTORIA - There are several things parents can do to ease the back-to-school transition for their child:

- Begin a new routine. Consider having your child shift to their school bedtime routine about a week before the first day of school. This way, they have time to adjust.
- Take a school tour. Contact your school to see if you can arrange a time to take your child for a walk through the school. Help them find their classroom, the bathroom, the lunchroom and other places they may have concerns about locating.
- Start the year with the regular walk or school bus routine. Walking with your child to school or waiting for the bus with them will help them establish their new routine.
- Be positive. Acknowledge and talk to your child about the mixed emotions they may be feeling as the school year approaches. Remind them of the friends they will meet, the new things they will learn and the wonderful experiences they will have.
- Arrange a play-date. If possible, organize a play-date with your child and another child from their school or program so they will see a familiar face on the first day.
- Choose clothes for school early. Have your child select their outfit the night before. This helps start the next morning off on a calm, routine note.
- Try designating regular times for family reading. During these times, everyone in the house sits down for some uninterrupted reading time, either alone or together.
- Create a homework routine. Have a regular place and time for your child to do homework, turn off the TV, and set a good example by reading or work on a project of your own.
- Make time for discussion. Focus on your child at the end of the day. Ask questions and listen about how their day went and what the highlights were.
- Meet your child's teacher and school principal. You can get valuable insight into your child's progress through informal chats with school staff.
- Stay active. This is the time of year where children start to spend a lot more time sitting inside. Go to the park together, play catch or walk to school - keep fit.
- Get involved in the school community. Consider contacting your local school board or the Parent Advisory Council at your child's school for volunteer opportunities.