

Summer is the time for sun and fun as well as loosey-goosey schedules for the whole family. Then, before you know it, it's time to set the alarm and get back to school. Sure you've got all the supplies bought, but are you really ready for that first day? There are some simple things you can do to ease the transition before that alarm sounds.

- Get back to a regular sleep schedule. At least 1 week before the first day of school, get back to regular and early bed times.
- Just like a good sleep routine, regular meal times are also important to re-establish a week before school starts. It's essential that breakfast include protein to keep you going all day long. Dinner is ideal between 5-7pm. It's best for your stomach to have time to fully digest your meal before heading off to bed.
- Turn off the electronics 1 hour before going to bed. That will tell your brain it's time for sleep, which will cause your body to start producing melatonin (the sleep hormone). If your child likes to read in bed, do it with an old fashioned book rather than an electronic reader.
- Pack lunches and snacks the night before. Make sure you choose energy supporting whole foods over sugary or processed foods. Set yourself up for success by prepping veggies once a week and storing them in the fridge where you can grab and pack them in seconds. Snacks such as hummus and carrots or an apple with nut butter are great choices.
- Hydration is essential. How much water do you need? I suggest about  $\frac{1}{2}$  your body weight in ounces. So if you weigh 100 pounds, then 50oz of water is a good estimate.
- The first day of school can often cause a bit of anxiety or nervousness. Check in with your child to see how they're feeling. Let them express their fears and anxieties without trying to diminish them or problem solve. Something that both you and your child can do when you are feeling a bit anxious or unsettled is place one hand on your heart and the

- other on your belly and breathe deeply.
- Get back to basics with hygiene. Hand washing is the simplest way to avoid catching colds and flues. Teach your kids to thoroughly soap up their hands and get between their fingers all while singing a full round of “Happy Birthday.” So lather up and sing away.
  - Take time the night before the first day to organize. Have your kids pack their backpacks and leave them at the door. Have them choose their outfit and set it out.

Helping you and your kids get ready to transition from no routine to the routine of the school schedule can be simple when you start about a week before hand. Check in with your kids and ask them how they think they can help get ready. You may be surprised with their ideas and suggestions. Incorporating them into the process will help them feel ownership and willingness to participate. Taking the week before will give you all the space you need to slowly move into the daily routine so that on the first day everyone easily adjusts and hopefully goes out the door feeling calm and happy.

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