

# August Newsletter

Back to school



## K.I.D.S. Therapy

### *Transitioning from Summer Fun to School Structure*

### *How to beat the Back-to-School Blues and Set Your Child up For Success*

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The transition from summer back to school can be tough for everyone. The daily routine that the child has been used to for the past 2-3 months is now changing. Getting off to a good start at school can influence your child's confidence, attitude, and performance both socially and academically. The adjustment depends on the child, but parents can help their children manage the change of pace by planning ahead, being realistic, and maintaining a positive attitude. This month, let us help you pack your child's backpack as we get them ready to head back to school.

#### **Here are some tips to help ease the back to school process:**

- \*Tour the school and the rest of the campus ahead of time (show your child where they will eat lunch, where they will line up in the morning, where they will go for recess and where they will meet you at the end of the day).
- \*Practice your morning routine *before* the first day of school. (Use of a visual schedule may be helpful for your child to know what to expect for the first day.)
- \*Take the bus route with your child (if applicable) so they know what to expect.
- \*Get school supplies well in advance with your child's help so they get excited about school.
- \*Ask your child to help you pack their lunch so they feel empowered and know what to expect at lunch time.
- \*Have your child meet their new teacher before the first day of school, if possible.
- \*Plan to re-establish bed time and meal time (especially breakfast) routines. Prepare your child for this change by talking about the benefits of school routines in terms of not

being over tired or overwhelmed by school work and activities.

- \*Leave plenty of extra time. Make sure your child has plenty of time to get up, eat breakfast, and get to school.
- \*Color code notebooks and materials (if applicable) to help your child keep materials together (e.g. blue= math, red = English, etc.).
- \*Get school clothes, uniforms, or shoes early to ensure that your child is as comfortable as possible in his/her new outfits. (If your child demonstrates sensitivity to the touch of the new clothes, you may need to wash them a few times before he/she wears them. You can also have your child practice wearing the new clothes so he/she can get used to the way they feel.)
- \*Structure time on the weekends for review. Many students panic on Sunday evening because of the unknown for the coming week.

Have a great first day!

August, 2013

#### **Inside this issue:**

- \* How to beat the Back-to-School Blues and Set Your Child up For Success
- \* New School Year Jitters- how to help your child overcome anxiety
- \*How to Make New Friends
- \*Making a Homework Plan for the Older Student

Take a look at our website, <http://www.kidstherapyassociates.com/news/newsletter.cfm> to view our *It's Time to Go Back to School* social story and more!

#### **Write a postcard to the new teacher!**

Let your child's teacher get to know him/her before the first day of school. Some things your child can write about include how excited they are to start school, 3 interesting facts about themselves, or a few things that they are hoping to learn this year.



## New School Year Jitters

### How to help your child overcome anxiety

**Let your child know you care.** If your child is anxious about school, send personal notes in their lunch box or book bag. Reinforce ways to help them cope. Model optimism and confidence in your child (children learn by following their parent's example). Let your child know it is ok to be nervous when you start something new, but that they will be fine once he or she becomes familiar with classmates, teachers, and school routines. **Stay calm.** If the first few days are tough, try not to read

too much into it because this is very common. When you drop off your child, try not to linger. Teachers are trained to help them adjust. Reassure your child that you love them and will think about them frequently throughout that day. Tell them you look forward to seeing them later in the day. Remain calm and positive. **Arrange play dates.** Try to arrange get-togethers with some of your child's potential classmates before school starts or during the first few weeks of school to

help your child establish positive social relationships. **If possible and age appropriate, volunteer in the classroom.** This helps your child understand that school and family life are linked and that their learning experience is important to you. This is also a good way to develop a relationship with your child's teacher and to understand classroom environment and routine. Most teachers welcome occasional parent help, even if it's not regular the week on the top and the routines on the left hand side.

### Brain Breaks

Brain Breaks may help your child to maintain attention, focus, and a ready brain and body during homework tasks. Here are a few ideas to try with your child at home:

\***Palm pushes** (hold palms flat against each other with fingers pointing up, hold up at chest level and push palms against each other for 10 seconds)

\***Big stretches** (reach tall like a tree and hold for 5 seconds, then hang down with hands towards toes for 5 seconds, repeat 2-3 times)

\* **Wall push-ups** or pushes (push-ups against a wall or push against a wall as if you're knocking it over for 10 seconds)

\* Take a quick **walk/jog/bike** ride around the block

\* **Chew gum** or eat chewy snacks (i.e. jerky, fruit leather, bagels, etc)

### Making New Friends

Many students struggle with meeting new friends and introducing themselves to others during the first few weeks of school. Help your child prepare for social interactions by practicing these skills before school begins. Together with your child, review your child's basic information, favorite things, and fun activities or places he or she went over summer. Then practice verbalizing this information by creating mock social interactions and introductions using role play or dolls/figurines. Model and practice how your child can introduce himself to others, ask a friend how his summer was, and ask others to play. You can also download a copy of K.I.D.S. Therapy's **Making Friends at School** social story from our website, and then let your child personalize it. Read it frequently before school begins!

### Developing a Homework Plan for the Older Student

Homework is an important part of learning. Reviewing learned materials on a regular basis may help your child store the information in his/her long term memory. Planning ahead can make homework easier and less stressful for everyone. Make a form like the one below to help your child develop a plan for his/her homework study time and space.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Circle the answer that best fits you or fill in your own answers.

1. When I study or do homework I need
  - a. quiet
  - b. soft music
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
2. When I do homework I like to be
  - a. alone
  - b. with family
  - c. with a study partner
3. I like to study and do homework
  - a. right after school
  - b. after I've had a break
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_

I think that the best places for studying are:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Look at your answers above and show them to your parents. Then decide on a plan together.

The place I will study and do homework is \_\_\_\_\_.

The time I will do my homework is \_\_\_\_\_.

If I need help I will \_\_\_\_\_.



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