

Starting fresh

Getting back into school routines

Over the summer, children often develop different schedules; staying up later, sleeping in, eating at various times. As summer comes to a close it's time to start thinking about getting the kids back into a school routine. The following tips may be helpful as you prepare your children to go back to school.

- Ease the transition into school-time hours by starting the countdown about one to two weeks before school begins. Get the kids back into their daily routine by reverting to their old bedtime, or perhaps creating a new one depending on the developmental age of your child.
- Dust the cobwebs from the alarm clock and begin getting the children up about 15 minutes earlier every couple of days until they are up at the required time for school. You know your child's habits in the morning, so guide the "wake-up" time accordingly. Some children will need more time in the morning than others.
- Breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Over the summer when children may be sleeping in a little later, sometimes that first meal gets lost into brunch or even lunch. Try to re-establish a regular routine of whatever is appropriate in your home for a healthy breakfast.
- For young children, about one week before school starts do a "dry run." Get the kids up early and go through a morning routine as if they had school that day. Walk the children to school for the regular start time, then spend some time at the school. The kids may want to play on the playground, or you could prepare a snack to share together on the grounds. This is a good time to reinforce routes and safety precautions they need to take when walking to and from school.
- Talk to your children about things they are looking forward to when they start back to school. You can even write up a list, or have them create a picture of an activity they will soon be able to enjoy.
- Remember that children model what they see in their parents. If parents are anxious or worried, their child can become anxious or worried as well. If parents are positive and encouraging about the start of a new school year, then their child is also likely to view it with excitement.

Please contact the administration at your school if you have any questions or concerns regarding the start of the new school year.