



BACK TO SCHOOL TIPS

Establish morning and bedtime routines. Routines help children and teens develop a rhythm to their day and will make the transition back to school easier.

Prioritize sleep and PDF (Playtime, Downtime & Family Time). Aim for 11-12 hours of sleep for preschoolers, 10 hours for school-age children and 9-10 hours for teens. Research shows that sleep and PDF are critical for overall well-being and mental health.

Resist overscheduling. Encourage your child to find activities that they are truly interested in, love and are meaningful to them. Make sure that there is a healthy balance between school, homework, activities, friends, and PDF.

Embrace a growth mindset. A growth mindset centers on the belief that intelligence, talents and abilities grow stronger through hard work, experience and help from others. A growth mindset values effort, perseverance, problem-solving and the process of learning. It reframes failure as simply a part of the learning process.

Avoid putting too much focus on grades. Instead focus on responsibility, independence, curiosity, engagement, kindness, connection, and bravery.

Encourage daily movement. Children need at least one hour of physical activity each day. Take a walk, play outside, go for a bike ride, have a dance party, just get moving!

Create a family media plan and adopt screen-free mealtime. Everyone can benefit from clear expectations and rules about media use as well as uninterrupted time together at mealtimes. Take the time to talk, laugh and connect.

Encourage your child to talk about their feelings and focus on listening to their response. If you are supporting a younger child, help them to identify and name their feelings in order to better address them.

Identify ways to reduce stress and anxiety. Learn, model and practice mindful and calming activities as a family. They're good for everyone!

Remind your child that they are not alone. Encourage them to talk with you or another trusted adult. Let them know that you are there to support them and that you will work out problems or concerns together.

Check out our *Tips for Easing Back to School Anxiety* blog post at bstrongtogether.org.

