

TIPS AND TRICKS FOR THE BEGINNING OF A NEW SCHOOL YEAR

For Parents:

- Establish the same school schedule ahead of time if possible. Ensure your child is going to sleep and waking up at the same time they would be for the upcoming school day.
- Prepare outfits, lunches, and backpacks the night before to reduce morning stress.
- Keep communication open with your child. Ask questions about how they're feeling with the upcoming changes. Encourage any big emotions that might be shared.
- Drive by the school or even stop in if your child's school will allow it. Call ahead and ask if you can come in for a visit/tour.
- Reach out to your child's grade-level counselor for more information regarding any possible challenges that may arise as they're the experts!

For Students:

- While a new school year and set of teachers/classmates can be intimidating, ask your teachers when you have questions. If you're nervous about asking it out loud, write it down on a piece of paper, or even send an email if it's allowed. Your parent(s) or guardian(s) can also help with asking your teacher questions after the school day!
- If you start to feel anxious during the school day, remember to take deep breaths and focus on the positives. Remind yourself of a favorite spot or safe space to make the anxious moment more relaxing (for example, a beach, your bedroom, a favorite park, etc.)
- Try calming down by practicing one of the following quiet hand tricks:
- Trace your fingers on one hand with the other.
- Squeeze your hands tightly in and out. Squeeze and release until you start to feel calm.
- Practice the 5-4-3-2-1 exercise! Find:
 - 5 objects you can see
 - 4 objects you can touch
 - 3 things you can hear
 - 2 things you can smell
 - 1 thing you can taste

Key Takeaway: Open Communication Is Essential

Student to Parent: Encouraging students to feel safe and open sharing their thoughts at home.

Student to Staff: Empowering students to ask teachers and school staff for support whenever needed.

Parent to School: Fostering strong, approachable connections between parents and staff during stressful transitions.

Resources:

<https://www.connecticutchildrens.org/growing-healthy/12-calming-exercises-teach-your-child>
<https://www.waterford.org/blog/mindfulness-activities-for-kids/>

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