



Back to School Ideas Exchange

www.kidsacademy.mobi

Recently, we invited you to answer a few questions and share your feelings and advice related to the beginning of the new school year. We asked our long-term collaborator Nora Brown, who's an experienced elementary teacher and a mother of 2 elementary-school-age kids, to review the answers we received and to share some insights for the new school year 2023.



The beginning of the school year is such an exciting time full of new beginnings! However, it can also be a very overwhelming time. For me, as a mom and a teacher, the start of a new school year represents a lot of change in our house. This year in particular because my youngest started kindergarten! That meant that we had two children in school full time. As parents, we worry. We worry about sending our kids off, for the first time in many cases, to be without us for the entire day. We put our most valuable possessions in the hands of another. Below, I'll go through some typical responses we received from Kids Academy subscribers and will share some tips from my personal and professional experience to help ease the stress that may come with the changes of a new school year.

"Show excitement so your child can be excited." Andrea, parent of a kindergarten student

Kids Academy's users reported that getting back into the school routine was a challenge, and I couldn't agree more! Emma is a parent to a first grader who says that her child wants summer to go on forever! Many parents report feeling calm, positive and excited about their kids going to school, while others share the feelings of anxiety and apprehension. Your children might not be sure how to feel about a new school year, and they will look to you in terms of how they should be feeling about school. If you are excited, they will be excited. Validate feelings of nervousness, anxiety and worry that your child may share with you, but try to approach the new school year as a time full of opportunities for new friends, learning and fun!

Nihira, a parent of a kindergarten student, suggests taking your child into school and showing them where their classroom and all other main areas, like cafeteria, gym and rest rooms, are. Many schools will have a meet-and-greet day where students can meet their new teacher. Participating in events such as this will help ease the transition into a new school year.

A new academic year means new routines. The morning routine can be stressful, especially at the start of the year. Here are some things that you can do to make this transition easier.

- Discuss lunch the night before (will they be buying lunch or bringing it)
- Discuss snack options (if your child brings a snack) the night before
- Choose clothes the night before
- Prepare backpack the night before with any folders or books that are needed for the next day
- Have quick breakfast options like granola bars, yogurt or fruit

Being prepared for the morning will help make the rush of waking up and getting out the door more of a positive experience. Andrea, a mom of a kindergartener, suggests

practicing earlier bedtimes and wake-ups before the school year begins to get a head start on these new routines.



If your child is not reading by the end of first grade, you must make it an all or nothing priority. Sara, parent of a first grader

Some parents reported worry about preparing their children academically for a new school year indicating confidence in their children's reading abilities, general knowledge and advanced phonics among other challenges they face at the beginning of this academic year. As a teacher, I can tell you that every child is so very different. They all learn and grow at different rates. In my classroom I cultivate and celebrate the strengths of each child. Some children relish in constructing things with their hands while others are immediately drawn to books or writing. Try to allow your child to find what they enjoy and encourage them to explore that. If possible, take trips to the public library and allow your child to explore a wide variety of texts. Even if they are just looking at the pictures to start, that is a building block in the foundation of literacy. I always tell my parents, if your child doesn't like to read, don't push them too hard. The last thing we want is for them to feel that reading is a chore that they dread. Start with just encouraging a few minutes a day. This might be you reading to them or them exploring their books. Try out many different types of books: non fiction, graphic novels, picture books, magazines. The more variety your child has, the more likely they will find something that will get them

hooked! You can also check out Kids Academy's [phonics](#) and [reading](#) worksheets for different grade levels.



Start tasks for them, allow them to learn finishing. Sara, parent of a first grader

Another challenge that users reported was helping their child be more independent. There are ways that you can foster this right at home. Encourage your child to do things independently at home. Start out simple, with something that you know they can be successful at. My son, for example, has been working on putting on his socks and shoes (slip ons) on his own. He often still wants us to help him, but we encourage him to do this task on his own as much as possible. For older children, like my 8 year old daughter, encourage them to help out with tasks such as feeding a pet, or making their bed.

Pack good healthy lunches. Everything else is out of your control. Sara, parent of a first grader

For those of you preparing young students for their first school experience, lunch is one place where you can help them to prepare. It may seem small, but helping your practice opening wrappers and containers will ensure that your child's lunch is a smooth one.



Stay calm , everything will fall in place. Mama, parent of a first grader

As a teacher, I love the start of the school year. It is a fresh start with new faces and new personalities to get to know. I love the potential that is there and can't wait to watch them learn and grow. As a mom, I look forward to my children experiencing the joy of learning and meeting new friends. I hope that some of the tips I have shared will help you and your family to have a smooth transition into a new school year.

Below are some more awesome insights Kids Academy has received from its subscribers:

Get a routine in place. Sara, parent of a first grader

Preparing kids with earlier bed time and wake up time a week or two before actual resumption Mama, parent of a first grader

Lunch is the best part of the day but it can be educational and fun. Teach them to explore new foods, look up where their food comes from, see what kids eat to lunch etc. and make them pack your lunch once in a while hitting all the major food groups and colors. We eat with our eyes and our nose. Sara, parent of a first grader

Be ready but it'll be OK. Emma, parent of a first grader

What advice would you like to share with other parents of elementary students? Let us know in the comments below! ↓

