

## **Five Ways to Help Your Child Adjust to a New School Year**

You may notice that the house is a little quiet the first week of school! This is only natural as everyone adjusts to the new routines of schools. Don't expect most children to be very chatty—it's exhausting for anyone to juggle new classrooms, friends, early bedtimes, and earlier wake-up calls! It is an exciting but intense time for children—new friends, new teachers, and new responsibilities can overwhelm even the most confident child. There are small things you can do that your child will appreciate to help them adjust to the new school year:

- **Make sure home routines are very regular.**

This provides children with a sense of security as they adjust to the new demands of school. Firm bedtimes and consistent routines such as reading together just before lights out will help your child master the new routines away from home much more quickly.

- **Organize that book bag!**

Now is the time for you to set up a quiet area, time, and ground rules for help with school projects or homework. Read any materials sent home about the school rules and routines carefully, so you can help your child with new responsibilities and rules.

- **Set up an area for doing homework.**

Help your child choose a spot at home in which to do homework. Keep the study area quiet (no TV or radio) and off limits to others during homework time. Make sure it has enough light. Fill a container, such as a shoebox, with supplies need to do homework (paper, pencils, pencil sharpener, stapler, tape, crayons, ruler, paper clips, erasers, dictionary). This will keep your child from wasting time looking for supplies. Avoid using these special homework supplies for other family needs. Schedule daily homework time. Consider writing the time for homework for each day of the week on a calendar and displaying it where it can be seen. Encourage and reward your child for sticking to the schedule. This will help eliminate arguments about when homework is to be done.

- **Hide a note or two.**

Write a short note to your child reminding them that you're thinking of them all day long, and then hide it in their lunch or backpack. Your child will love coming across a happy note from home as they are in the midst of adjusting to a new environment.

- **Plan a special event for the weekend.**

It might include preparing your child's favorite meal, or a last trip to the beach or favorite playground. Celebrate the hard work your child (and you) have done all week adjusting to school by treating yourselves to time together you can both enjoy.