



Rosario Counseling & Associates August 2012 E-News



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Back-To-School!

Top 10 List of Tips for Parents to Help your Child Thrive in Transition

1. Celebrate the end of summer- Reflect on the summer as a family... sharing highlights and what you hope to be able to repeat next summer.
2. Model JOY- Your child will gain more confidence and excitement for this transition to school if you talk about it with a tone of excited anticipation. Try to think of all the positive things that they like about school and talk about them as much as possible.
3. Start asking questions- What was one of your favorite teachers last year? Who is someone you look forward to seeing at school? What was one of the most fun memories from last year?
4. Re-establish routine- Family routines tend to slide in the summer... and it can be hard to re-adjust. Practice school bedtimes and wake times a week before school starts so that the new routine is established. The more kids have ownership in creating a routine for themselves and setting expectations, the more likely they are to follow them.
5. Get Ready- Enjoy preparing the backpack, buying school supplies and clothes, and stocking up on packed lunch items with your child well in advance. Involving your child in these preparations can increase their excitement and make them look forward to the big first day. If possible, visit the new setting with your child and introduce your child to their new teacher.
6. Nurture Independence- If your child is young, you can instill skills that will build confidence and independence at school. Older children can grow into taking on more and more responsibilities such as packing their lunch, waking by an alarm, cleaning up after breakfast, etc.
7. Talk about the first day so they know what they can expect. Back to school books may also be especially helpful for young children. For those children who struggle with separation anxiety, develop a good-bye routine in advance (i.e. "When I say goodbye to you, I will give you a big hug and remind you that I'll see you after school. After our goodbye, I will leave so you can get settled in your classroom.") (If your child whines or clings, staying around will only make it harder on them.)
8. Talk about feelings- Remind your child that it's normal to feel a little nervous about the first week back. Reassure them with stories of how you've seen them adapt or quickly adjust in the past and verbalize your confidence in them.
9. Debrief- Be sure to be intentional about setting aside time to talk about their experience the first days of school.
10. Set up a time and a place for homework- Make homework a part of your family's every day routine. It really helps children if homework is around the same time each day

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If you or your child or adolescent finds transitions difficult, our experienced therapists at Rosario Counseling & Associates are prepared to help. Please contact our office at 919-649-5882 to schedule an appointment.