**Back-To-School Routines (During the COVID-19 Pandemic)**

As students prepare to head back into learning mode, the classroom may be a bit different this year. No desks and no peers – the possibility of a [virtual learning format](https://abc11.com/society/cooper-announces-order-that-will-halt-alcohol-sales-after-11-pm/6338749/) lingers.

Even with the change, experts say it's important to get your kids into a back-to-school mindset.

Dr. Mitch Prinstein is a professional in adolescent mental health and a professor at UNC.
"Kids have been at home for a very long time," Dr. Prinstein said. "They've been at home at the end of last school year. They have been home for the summer. And now for the fall they need to feel like something Is changing in their schedule. They need to feel in a way which their routine is reflecting a new type of activity every day, it's not just an extension of what they have been doing all summer."

Dr. Prinstien suggests four things to help transition students to the back to school mindset:

\* Parents, if you can, set aside a space that is specifically for learning - perhaps that spare room in the home or a spot at the kitchen table
\* Parents of elementary students: make sure you allowing your child to do school work in chunks, and allowing for physical activity and relaxation time.
\* Parents of middle school students: Students at this age will need positive reinforcement. It is important to recognize that it is hard to sit and focus on a single task without being surrounded by peers.
\* Parents of high school students: At this age, many teens can monitor their own work. Make sure your student's screens are on schoolwork and not on social media

To rock your family’s back to school routine, here are six easy items to consider:

1. One Last Fling

While you are figuring out schedules and supplies, do not forget about having some fun, too!  Was there one thing you have been meaning to do all summer, but just never got around to it? What would your kids love to do one last time? Try to fit in that picnic trip to the park, a backyard camp out, or one more night of catching lightning bugs and watching a movie under the stars.

2. Supplies

Look back over your school shopping lists to be sure you did not miss anything important.

3.  Packing Lunches

Help to make lunchtime a little smoother, pack lunches the night before. Even a kindergartner can pack part of their lunch, so be sure to ask the kids to pull their own weight!  Refrigerated items can go in a basket marked with each child’s name for simple mornings.

4.  Know Your Schedule

Who is lost without their calendar? At the beginning of the school year, try to find a school calendar. Enter as many items on your own calendar as possible. That way you will start to have some idea of what next May will be like.

5.  Have a Routine

A general plan or checklist of things that must be done each day is good, *but it must move with life*. For instance, decide that each morning, you will empty the dishwasher, run a load of laundry, make the bed, and choose supper. Even if you do not do anything else on a busy day, your family will be able to run smoothly. The kids have expectations for the morning, too.

\*dress (this may also mean putting on shoes).

\*eat breakfast

\*brush teeth

\*put together lunch (packed the night before)

\*gather everything needed for school

###  6. Bedtime

People suggest that you get kids adjusted to an earlier bedtime a bit at a time.  Move their summer bedtime forward 15 minutes each night. In fact, it is easier to make sure they get up a bit earlier each day leading up to the big morning. It is also important to have a bedtime routine.  Give your body a signal that you are getting ready to lie down for the night.  Try having kids wash their face (or showering), brush their teeth and read for a bit (if that is calming).

Article Resource: (<https://abc11.com/back-to-school-nc-covid-19-coronavirus/6339888/>

Article Resource ([www.mediumsizedfamily.org](http://www.mediumsizedfamily.org))

**Between Families Newsletter
Training Questions
Back-To-School Routines (During the COVID-19 Pandemic)**

**August 2020**

**PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ½ HOUR CREDIT.**

Questions:

1. List 2 items to consider in a back-to-school routine:

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1. Parents of elementary students: make sure you allowing your child to do school work in chunks, and allowing for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
2. Parents of middle school students: Students at this age will need positive reinforcement. It is important to recognize that it is hard to sit and focus on a single task without being surrounded by peers.
3. True
4. False
5. Do you have a final summer fling within your home? If so, what are some fun ideas your family participates in? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
6. List 2 suggested steps for a child’s morning routine?

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6. Teenagers online routines should NOT be monitored to ensure they are focusing on schoolwork.

a. True

b. False

1. To get children adjusted to a school sleeping routine, move their sleeping time forward \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ minutes each night.
2. Just before getting ready for bed, what are two things children can do for themselves? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
3. For middle school students: students will need positive reinforcement. It is important to recognize that it is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and focus on a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ without being surrounded by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
4. A general plan or checklist of things that must be done each day is good, but it must move with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.