

Going Back to School

Elementary

STRONG⁴LIFE™



Supporting your child

Returning to school is a big transition, and every child responds differently. Here are some ways to help support your child:

Strategy	Try saying	Instead of
Validate feelings. Let your child know that you understand what they said—by repeating back what you heard, without judgment—and that it's normal to feel that way.	"It's normal to feel nervous about going back to school."	"It will be fine! There's nothing to be nervous about."
Model healthy coping skills. Model positive ways you handle stress, and involve your child in practicing healthy coping skills.	"I'm feeling overwhelmed by everything that is going on. I'm going on a walk to unwind. Want to join me?"	"Everything's fine! We'll get through it."
Keep your cool. Be careful not to pass along any anxiety you may have.	"Take it one day at a time. I know you will do your best."	"I think this is going to be a really challenging year."

Talking to your child about their day

Whether your child is tired after a long day, or doesn't know what to share, it's common for kids to give one-word answers. Encourage them to say more by asking specific, open-ended questions.



Advocating for your child

Even though your child spends a lot of their time at school, you still know them best.

- ✓ Frequently check in with your child's teacher and be open and honest about your child's strengths and needs.
- ✓ If your child is facing challenges outside of school, let the staff know what is going on and that your child may need extra support throughout the day.



Help everyone **prioritize tasks and stay organized** by hanging up a family calendar with upcoming projects, deadlines and test dates.

Practicing healthy habits

Practicing healthy habits as a family helps support your child's mind and body while positively impacting their mood, focus and behavior.

Routines. Knowing what to expect can help create a sense of comfort and security. Try to maintain simple routines to keep things as predictable as you can (e.g., keeping consistent bedtimes).

Nutrition. Children need to fuel their bodies to fuel their minds. Drink water, and eat three meals and two to three snacks at consistent times each day.

Sleep. Turn off digital screens and electronic devices an hour before bedtime, and keep devices out of the bedroom to get quality rest.

Activity. All kids need time to be active, play and have fun. Encourage your child to incorporate movement into the day by going on walks, stretching, riding a bike, or putting on music and dancing.

Coping. Whether it's taking some deep breaths, playing a game, drawing or talking to someone, encourage your child to practice healthy ways of coping with their feelings and handling stress.



5-year-olds typically need 10 to 13 hours of sleep in a 24-hour period.

6- to 12-year-olds typically need 9 to 12 hours of sleep in a 24-hour period.