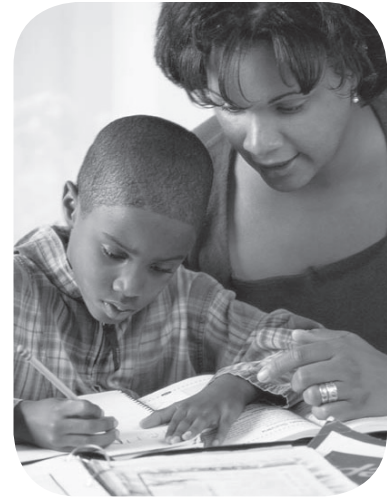


BACK TO SCHOOL - 10 TIPS TO HELP YOUR CHILD SUCCEED



1. SCHEDULE CHECK-UPS: Most schools require up to date immunization records before children return to school. Contact your child's school to find out what might be required and ask for the forms your healthcare provider needs to complete for school attendance as well as participation in sports or other school activities.

2. RESTART ROUTINES: All children need time to adjust, so plan ahead. A week before school starts, make bedtime earlier and start serving meals at the same time you will during the school year.

3. SET REASONABLE GOALS: Discuss with your child what goals she/he might want to reach this school year and make a list of them. These can be as simple as making two new friends this year, improving skills in reading or writing, or participating in the spelling bee!

4. GO OVER GROUND RULES: Determine when and where your child will do his/her homework, what chores your child will be doing, when he/she can watch TV or play on the computer and how late your child may stay up at night. Be sure to discuss this with your child so that everybody has a clear understanding on the expectations.

5. PICK YOUR BATTLES: Back-to-school can be a stressful time for both parents and children. Be flexible where you can. Planning ahead can often reduce stress for everyone. For example: review the dress code with your children and help them pick out several outfits that they like and also meet the requirements.

6. ARRIVE ON TIME: Help your children establish routines that help ensure they will arrive to school on time. Important information is often given right at the beginning of class when students are most focused and receptive. Regular attendance is essential for school success, so before planning family trips, check the school calendar and talk to your child's teachers about any work that will be missed.

7. DESIGNATE A HOMEWORK AREA: Create a quiet, well-lit and most importantly fun area for study without distractions and provide the necessary supplies your child needs, such as paper, pencil, and dictionary.

8. STAY INFORMED: Show your children that you value education by attending parent nights, signing and returning school notes, and establishing a positive relationship with teachers. Email is usually the best method of communication, but reading school newsletters is also helpful. Many schools offer parents online access to students' assignments, calendars, grades and other important information.

9. PLAN HEALTHY MEALS: Remember that nutrition is an important factor in school success. Research shows that children who eat healthy, balanced meals are more alert and perform better than those who have an unhealthy diet.

10. REMEMBER, HOMEWORK IS FOR YOUR CHILD: Learning new skills requires practice. Expect your children to do their personal best, but don't expect perfection. Homework assignments help teachers find out how well children understand what is being taught. Young children may need guidance and prompting to complete assignments, but older children should learn to take full responsibility for completing and turning in their own work. Alert teachers if your child consistently needs help to complete their homework. If assignments are too difficult for a child to complete on their own, they may need extra help at school.

HERE'S HELP

There are several programs that help with the costs of going back to school, including school supplies, lunches and health insurance. To find out if your family qualifies for assistance, speak to school administrators or your child's teachers. For more information on the National School Lunch Program, visit www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Lunch/.