

Your Back-to-School Checklist

- 1. Get back into a routine.** About 1-2 weeks before school starts, gradually (15 minutes each day) move your child's bedtime and wake up time back to what they will be during the school year.
- 2. Visit your doctor.** Make sure your vaccine records and sports physicals are up to date! Routine check-ups are especially important this year as many of us have not been seeing the doctor regularly since springtime.
- 3. Review your child's expected schedule and new routine for school.** If they are a visual learner, hang a calendar that shows which days they will be at school and which days they will be at home. This can help the whole family stay on track!
- 4. Get organized.** Make a plan for each day they are learning from home. Print it out or make a board with each daily item.
- 5. Talk about expectations – yours and your child's.** Ask your child what their goals are for the school year. Is your rule that homework be done before screen time? Remind them. On days they are learning from home, make sure to schedule in breaks, such as playtime, meals and an end time.
- 6. Plan for healthy meals and snacks.** Involve your child in the process so they learn how to make healthy food choices.
- 7. Develop a support system.** Child care arrangements may look different this year too. Form a Facebook group with those in your neighborhood or other friends with kids the same age as yours. Or see if your teacher is willing to share contact information for other parents in the class who have opted in. You can ask questions of them on days when your child is learning from home, or you can watch each other's kids when one of you is in a bind.

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8. Find other activities to be involved in outside of schoolwork. This can be online classes for exercise, learning a new skill, art or other common interests. Make a list of activities so you have them ready when needed.

- Tour a museum or manufacturing facility virtually.
- Take up a new hobby, like magic, bird watching or fishing, by watching YouTube videos or reading books on the subject.
- Learn to play an instrument.
- Set up an obstacle course or virtual fitness challenge with your friends.
- Drive around your city or town and observe the architecture, murals or other community artwork.

9. Meet teachers, coaches and program leaders. Introduce yourself to teachers, coaches and anyone else who will spend time with your child this year. Let them know the best way to reach you and share any important details about your child. You can request video chats or phone calls if it is not appropriate to meet in person.

10. Practice! Practice new procedures like hand washing, masking and anything else being asked of your child. This is especially important for younger children in elementary school.

11. Have a last hurrah. Have an at-home movie night, take a family bike ride or visit a local attraction like a park, museum or zoo. Whatever activity your family chooses, make sure to follow safety guidelines.