

BACK TO SCHOOL TIPS

Top 10 List (Mental Health Edition)

- 1 Remind your child that they're not alone.** Nearly everyone feels behind in school this year. Hang in there and just do your best!
- 2 Help your child know what to expect.** Find out the school's policies this year. What's different about lockers, classrooms, lunch or anything else?
- 3 Praise all your child's efforts!** Life's more than grades. Recognize their curiosity, kindness and bravery.
- 4 Pay attention to your own anxiety.** Kids can sense anxiety. Talk to other adults to ease worry and get professional help if you need it.
- 5 Get enough sleep.** Preschoolers need 11-12 hours, school-aged kids need 10 hours and teens need 9-10 hours.
- 6 Schedule quality time together.** Just 1 hour makes a difference. Here's a topic of conversation: What are you most excited about this year?
- 7 Encourage daily movement.** Children need 1 hour of physical activity a day — riding a bike, a dance party or whatever gets them moving.
- 8 Keep a routine.** Waking up and going to bed at the same time every day improves mental health. (This goes for adults too!)
- 9 Identify ways to calm stress.** Taking deep breaths or holding something comforting in your hand (like a smooth rock) quietly relieve stress.
- 10 Just ask!** Ask your child if they're worried about being back in the classroom. Be a good listener and support them.