

HELPING YOUR CHILD ADJUST TO GOING BACK TO SCHOOL AFTER LOCKDOWN

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Preparing your child mentally for the transition back to school:

Returning to the school environment and reuniting with friends after lockdown may be exciting to your child, but it may also make them feel like they are suddenly being plunged back into an intense situation. Talk to them about what they are looking forward to and what concerns they may have about going back to school.

Helping your child adjust returning to school:

- **Act as a sounding board.** Try to listen without immediately offering opinions or advice. Sometimes just talking about a problem or issue can help children come up with solutions of their own.
- **Take your child's concerns seriously.** Remember how challenging academic and social pressure can be even without adding in the additional stress of returning after a lockdown. Be careful not to belittle their concerns nor trivialize them.
- **Share some of the feelings and experiences you're going through when appropriate.** Speaking in an age-appropriate way about your own worries about the relaxation of lockdown rules and what you are doing to help you cope may create an open environment to help your child share their own thoughts and concerns.
- **Keep talking to your child about anything and everything.** Grab opportunities to discuss important issues, but also ask simple questions like, "How was your day?" Do everything you can to maintain a strong bond and keep the lines of communication open so they feel that they can openly and honestly discuss things with you.
- **Make it a priority to motivate them to learn.** When they return to the classroom, show that you are as curious and interested in what your child is learning as you were about their home-schooling work. Encourage them by giving specific, concrete praise such as "I really like your detail in this project," rather than a general comment of "You're such a great student." This indicates to your child that you have made an effort and noticed their efforts.
- **Work with your child's school.** Don't be afraid to ask for help. Let the school know if you're worried about anything in particular, or if your child could benefit from extra help in making the transition back from home to school.