



Is summer over?

Tips for transitioning your kids back to school...without going back TO school

If you're like me, you long for summer days. Playing outside until dark, PJs until late morning that give way to a bathing suit, bike riding, catching lightening bugs and barbecues in the backyard. But this year feels different. Despite what your summer may have looked like, if you are at home with your child(ren) while e-learning, it's hard to know when summer vacation ends and school starts. It's easy to confuse these warm, sunny days with our typical summer schedule, but summer is wrapping up, and school is here.

As a parent, and school psychologist, I wanted to compile some tips to help your child transition back to school, even if grabbing our backpack and heading to the bus stop is not our current reality. We understand that everyone's situation is different, and not all of these tips apply to you. Feel free to peruse them and select the ones that work best for you, or your child's daily caregiver:

- **set an alarm**

while it may be a touch later than a typical school year (save on the travel time), it's important students have enough time to complete their morning routine prior to starting their school day

- **eat breakfast before school**

no matter what this looks like, it's important that your child has eaten prior to their first class. This will allow your child to have a full stomach and be ready to focus

- **get dressed, brush teeth, brush hair, etc.**

don't worry, we love seeing your kids no matter what, but for many kids, if they roll out of bed and right to their computer screen to log in, they may not have the "school mindset" where they are ready to focus and learn. Having them get ready for the day not only promotes good hygiene, but also mimics their typical school morning routine

- **schedule breaks and snacks**

during the summer, my children graze throughout the day, and go outside frequently, however it's important for our kids to learn to manage their time around their zoom meetings and school obligations. By scheduling snacks and breaks, it reminds them how to work hard and take breaks on a schedule as they do here in our Somonauk schools

- **limit distractions**

when attending a zoom call, or actively engaging in a school activity, limit distractions for your child. Remove any materials they may not need and have them focus on the task and tools needed to complete their work

- help them build independence

depending on the age of your child, helping them to organize their time and materials and "checking in" at set times may be a great way to allow them to practice their own management skills, yet still know you will be there to support them

- help them problem solve

e learning is new to all of us. Seeing our child miss a meeting, become frustrated with technology, or not understand a zoom lesson can be maddening. How we, as parents, react can greatly impact how our children face adversity and challenges. Teaching our child to look back at directions/Google classroom/Seesaw/etc., email a teacher for clarification, attend open office hours, etc. are lessons that go beyond this year of e learning, and can help them throughout their lives!

We've said it many times, but we are all in this together. Many of us are educators are parents, and understand this transition from summer to fall is exceptionally challenging for students and families. Please do not hesitate contacting your child's teacher(s) or the Student Services Department with specific questions or concerns.

Have a wonderful fall season!

-Reneé Porter

Somonauk School Psychologist

(and mom of e-learners)