



August Monthly Topic:

Planning Ahead for Back to School

Yes, we know it feels like summer vacation just started, but it is time to start thinking about preparing for another school year. Here are some things to keep in mind for children across the grades:

Elementary School

- ✓ Can your child tie his shoes? If not, Velcro shoes may be easier than asking for help when laces come untied. Can your child quickly manage buttons or snaps on his clothing for successful bathroom trips?
- ✓ Can your child open the snack and beverage containers you are planning to send for lunch? Have several practice lunches at home. This not only works on fine motor skills, but also learning to save some food for lunch time and not eat it all during snack.
- ✓ Does your child understand the rules (spoken and unspoken) of the bus? Remain seated at all times. If you are the first one in a seat, move towards the window so there is room for someone to sit next to you. Voice volume at a moderate level. Keep your backpack zipped up so it doesn't spill. Gather your things before the bus gets to your stop so you are ready to get off quickly.

Middle School and High School

- ✓ Does your child know how to organize papers? Color coding the folders for different classes may be helpful. Practice using a planner at home. Have your child record household chores or appointments to attend. Older children with phones should learn to set reminder alerts for important tasks.
- ✓ Can your child navigate around a large building? Get a map of the school ahead of time to identify key locations, such as bathrooms and the nurse's office. Practice this skill in the community by asking your child use a map of the mall to find the way to a certain store.
- ✓ Can your child consistently open a combination lock? Purchase a lock ahead of time so he can become proficient in using it. Challenge him to open it with visual and auditory distractions or even when you are bumping up against him. If a standard combination lock is too difficult, try other types of locks, such as a padlock with a key or a letter-coded lock.