
Parents

Tips for Parents

Find useful tips to such topics as:

Preparing for School • Things to Consider Before the First Day of School • Going to a New School • Homework • Reading with Your Child • Safe Internet Use • Avoiding Conflict • Helping Your Child Prepare for High School • Helping Your Child Plan for the Future

Preparing for School

- **Ease Your Child into a New Routine.** Have him or her go to bed at school-night bedtime a few nights before the first day. Set an alarm clock for the correct school wake-up time.
- **Try a School Bus Run.** Go over your child's school bus route with him or her if it's going to be a first-time bus ride. Find out how long the ride is, and talk about things like bus safety.
- **Get Ready the Night Before.** Establish a routine that requires your child to pick an outfit for the next school day, and to pack a book bag every night before bed. This will help eliminate any last minute rushing in the morning.

Things to Consider Before the First Day of School

About the School

- Is your child registered?
- Do you know when the first day of school is and what time it starts?
- Have you completed emergency contact forms and sent them back to the school?

Getting to and from School

- Have you reviewed safety precautions with your child regarding traffic and strangers?
- If your child is riding a bike, does he or she know the school's rules for bicycles?
- If your child is taking a bus, does your child know the bus route? Does your child know what to do if he or she gets lost?
- Does your child know whether to come home or go to a babysitter after school?
- If you're not home after school, does your child know who will be responsible for him or her, what the rules are, and how to get help in an emergency?
- If your child is going to a babysitter, does he or she know how to get to there?

Going to a New School

- **Talk About It.** Encourage your child to share his or her feelings. Talk about the excitement of starting at a new school, and discuss any concerns your child might have.
- **Take a School Tour.** Call the school and arrange to tour the school with your child. Help your child find their way around the school and the location of their classroom and the bathroom. If possible, meet the teacher and principal.

- **Make a New Friend.** If possible, introduce your child to a classmate before the first day of school.

Homework

Helping Your Child Study

- **Establish a Routine.** Setting a regular time and sticking to it helps children complete their homework assignments.
- **Set the Mood.** Ensure the room your child studies in is quiet, has plenty of light, and has school supplies close at hand. Remove distractions by turning off the television and discouraging social phone calls during homework time.
- **Show an Interest.** Ask your child about school activities and talk about what was discussed in school that day. Take your child to the library to check out materials for homework, and make time to read with your child as often as you can.

Monitoring Homework Assignments

- **Be Informed.** Find out about the school's policy on homework at the beginning of the school year. Ask your child's teachers about the kind of assignments that will be given and what kind of time frame the children have to complete them.
- **Be Involved.** Ask the teacher how you can help with homework. Be available to answer your child's questions, look over completed assignments, and encourage your child to share returned assignments so you can read the teacher's comments.

Providing Guidance to Homework Assignments

- **Learn How Your Child Learns.** Understand your child's learning style and develop routines that best support how he or she learns best.
- **Encourage Good Study Habits.** Help your child get organized. Ensure your child has scheduled enough time to complete assignments.
- **Talk.** Discuss homework with your child. Talking about an assignment can help your child think it through and break it down into small, workable parts.
- **Provide Encouragement.** Find ways to support your child's efforts in completing assignments.

Reading with Your Child

- **Make Reading a Priority.** Let your child know how important it is to read regularly. Establish a regular time and place for reading.
- **Read to Your Child.** Make time to read to your child on a regular basis. It is a great way to help develop a love of learning.
- **Ask Your Child to Read to You.** Have your child read aloud to you.
- **Keep Reading Material Close By.** Make sure children's books and magazines are easily accessible. Keep a basket of books in the family room, kitchen, or your child's bedroom to encourage him or her to read more often.
- **Visit the Library.** Make visits to the library a regular activity and let your children select their own books.

- **Be a Reading Role Model.** Read a lot. Let your child see you read and hear you talk about your books.

Safe Internet Use

- **Do Your Research.** Find safe and relevant sites and child-friendly search engines for your child to use. Bookmark them for easy access.
- **Make an Agreement.** Create an agreement with your child that outlines which site he or she is allowed to visit, and which areas and activities are off-limits. Involve your child in this activity.
- **Stay Aware.** Keep lines of communication open so you know what Web sites your child is visiting. Pay attention to his or her surfing habits. Let your child know that he or she can come to you in case of trouble.
- **Report Suspicious Activity.** If you or your child encounter suspicious or dangerous situations online, report them to your Internet Service Provider and local police.

[More Tips for Safe Internet Use](#)

[Be Web Aware - a national public education program on Internet safety for young Canadians](#)

Avoiding Conflict

- **Listen.** Encourage your child to talk about school, social events, other kids in class, the walk or ride to and from school so you can identify any issues he or she may be having.
- **Look.** Watch for symptoms that your child may be a bullying victim. Be aware of signs such as withdrawal, a drop in grades, physical signs, or needing extra money or supplies.
- **Work with Others.** Tell the school immediately if you think your child is being bullied. Work with other parents to ensure that the children in your neighborhood are supervised closely on their way to and from school. Talk to the teacher or school's guidance counsellor for some professional advice.

Helping Your Child Prepare for High School

- **Educate Yourself.** Find out the requirements, choices, and processes involved in planning your teen's senior high school program with your child's teacher. Your teen will need your assistance and advice.
- **Plan Carefully.** Some Grade 10 courses are prerequisites for more advanced high school courses. As well, certain programs enable students to meet entry requirements for post-secondary programs or acquire the knowledge and skills to enter directly into a career. Keep future goals in mind when planning grade 10 programs.
- **Prepare for Post-Secondary.** If your teen intends to enter a post-secondary institution after high school, check the calendars of these institutions for admission requirements to plan his or her senior high school program accordingly.

Helping Your Child Plan for the Future

- Even as an adult, career decisions can be overwhelming. Encourage your child and give them the time and space to make their own decisions.
- Ask your teen about the kinds of careers they are considering and do not worry if it is accounting one day and nursing the next. They're thinking things over and imagining themselves in different roles.

Encourage them to take this exploration a bit further. Help them learn more about these choices. Find out why these careers are attractive to them and look at other careers they may not have considered that could offer similar rewards.

- Encourage your teen to think about the educational path they will need to follow to pursue the careers they're considering. Will they need to take certain subjects in high school to keep these options open? What kind of post-secondary education will they need? Where is the program offered and how long does it take to complete?
- Know where you and your teen can go to explore options or get more information. A great place to start is [Alberta Learning Information Service \(ALIS\)](#). This Web site offers up-to-date career profiles, links to post-secondary institutions, complete information on students finance and links to a variety of interactive career planning tools.

Tips for Parents from the ALIS website:

- [Your Children's Career: Help Them Discover Themselves](#)
- [Helping Teenagers Prepare for the World of Work](#)
- [Other Tips for parents in helping their children plan their future](#)

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