

# MOSAIC MENTAL HEALTH TIPS

THE OFFICIAL EAP NEWSLETTER OF MOSAIC COUNSELING

## HOW TO EASE YOUR KID'S BACK-TO-SCHOOL ANXIETY

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Preparing for the new school year can be a daunting task for both parents and children. To ensure a smooth transition, here are some tips and tech tools to help families navigate back-to-school challenges with confidence. From fostering open communication to leveraging the latest technology, these strategies will help set the stage for a successful academic year.

### Talk About It

Communication is key when helping your child prepare for the new school year. While you may think they are concerned about who they are going to sit with at lunch, their real concern could be something completely different. Try to get some alone time with your child on the way to the supermarket, cleaning up after dinner, or even walking the dog. Start on a positive note and ask them what they are most excited about for the new year. When they bring up concerns, validate them instead of dismissing what's bothering them. While it may not be a big deal to you, it could be everything to them.



### Make A Schedule

The logistics of a new routine can be overwhelming, especially if your child is anxious about a school bus, a carpool, or who will be picking them up. Create a schedule and pin it to a bulletin board in the kitchen so that each morning everyone knows what to expect. Then, create a shared digital schedule that everyone has on their phones. Reassure them that if you are late to pick them up or if their soccer game changed locations, they can call or text you to notify each other of variations in that day's schedule.

### Ease Into A Routine

If your child is up until 2:00 am on their phone and sleeping until 11:00 am every day, waiting to change those habits until the night before school starts will make a rough first day. A few days before they start, get them into a routine of going to bed and getting up at the time they will need to get ready for school. Figure out what they will eat for breakfast and what food you will need to have for them if they want to bring lunch or snacks with them. You may even want to walk or drive to school one day just so they know how long it takes or how to get there if they are driving or walking by themselves for the first time. This practice run can help identify any potential issues and provide an opportunity to address them before the first day.



## What to Expect

Understanding what to expect on the first day of school can significantly reduce anxiety. Take some time to review the school's schedule, class locations, and any new procedures or policies. Familiarize your child with their schedule, teachers, locker location, and even the layout of the school if it's in a new building. If you can walk through the school beforehand so they know where their classrooms are, that could help them as well. Be sure they know where you will be, who will be picking them up, and when they can expect to see you.

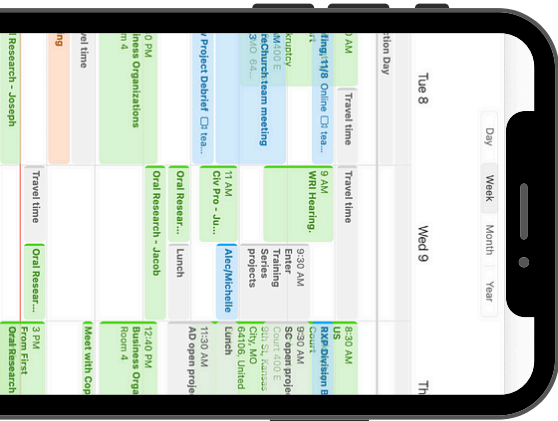
## Social Connections

Navigating social situations can be one of the most daunting aspects of returning to school, especially after a long break. If your child is anxious about starting a new school or being in a class with people they do not know, reach out to some of the parents and see if you can help your child meet some people before the first day of school. If your child is anxious about not being popular or having anyone to sit with at lunch, help them find a club or an after-school activity they enjoy. Sometimes, connecting with people with similar interests can give your child a sense of community. It's also important to discuss strategies for making new friends and maintaining positive relationships.



## Make Them Feel As Independent As Possible

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## Using Technology

Sharing a digital schedule and using cellular location settings between family members can be a game-changer when it comes to back-to-school butterflies. Kids do not like surprises. They feel the most secure when they know what to expect. They also want to feel someone is there to help them if they get in trouble. If your children rely on you to pick them up and you are late, seeing your location on the app gives them the peace of mind that you are on your way. This innovative technology ensures that your tween or teen can easily communicate with you in case of any issues. This allows your family to feel more connected, making the transition back to school smoother for everyone.

## You've Got This

By implementing these tips and utilizing the right tech tools, parents can help their children feel more prepared and confident as they head back to school. Open communication, structured routines, and supportive technology can make all the difference in easing the transition. Remember, Mosaic is here for your children if they feel they need to speak with a therapist. With a little planning and the right resources, this school year can be a successful and enjoyable experience for the whole family.