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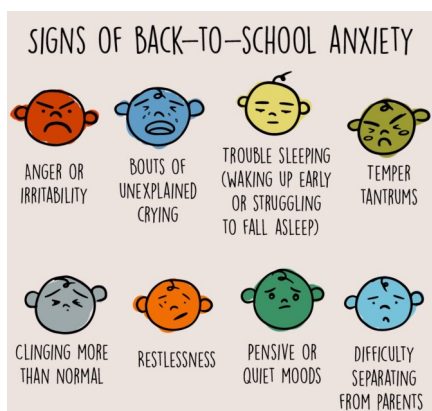
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The Achieve and Learn Trust believes that nothing is more important than safeguarding the young people in our schools.

It has been wonderful to welcome our young people across the Trust back into school over the past two weeks. For some children, coming back into school can be a challenge and parents can struggle with how to support their child in attending regularly. This bulletin gives some advice about those conversations to promote resilience and ensuring children attend regularly to ensure they achieve their full potential

Back to School

With the summer holidays coming to an end, going back to school can be daunting for some young people. Starting a new school or beginning a new school year can come with feelings of stress and anxiety. This can add to the many pressures impacting young people's mental health, alongside factors including inequality, an uncertain future, poverty and the online world. Parents and carers may not always be sure how best to support their child, but here are some things you can try to help your child prepare for the return to school.



What to do if your child is anxious about going back to school

Acknowledge your child's worries and anxieties and validate them. Let them know it is normal and expected for them to feel unsettled, particularly as they have been away from school for some time, and that it's okay for them to feel however they feel.

Have continuous conversations to explore what might be underlying the anxieties. This will help you think together about things that might help lessen the worries. It might be useful for them to write or draw their worries.

If your child is worrying about something in particular, you could discuss what they could do in that situation to help them feel better. If your child often feels worried or anxious, and it's upsetting them or making it difficult for them to think about or do other things, you can try making a worry box together.

Let your child's school know if they're struggling and talk to them about what support can be put in place. Some schools have mental health support teams which will be able to help in some circumstances, but accessing support for your child can be challenging and the help available varies between areas. If your child continues to struggle with their mental health and it's affecting their daily life, speak to your GP. For more information and advice, visit youngminds.org.uk or call the Young Minds Parents Helpline on 0808 802 5544.



Encouraging your child to talk about how they're feeling

Pick times where you're spending time together or engaging in an activity. This will help your child feel more comfortable and you can ease into asking questions about how they feel.

Use open questions such as why? What? How? rather than questions they can simply reply yes or no.

Having conversations when you are side by side and limiting direct eye contact can help things feel less daunting.

This [video](#) has more advice on how to support your child if they are struggling with school anxiety.

BACK TO SCHOOL SUPPLIES
10 ESSENTIAL MENTAL HEALTH TIPS

Family Care Center
Transforming Behavioral Health

- 1. Establish a Routine**
Create a daily schedule for bedtime, wake-up time, meals and studying to provide stability and help reduce anxiety.
- 2. Prioritize Sleep**
Adequate rest is crucial for mental health. Limit screen time and create a wind-down routine before bedtime.
- 3. Foster Open Communication**
Encourage expression of feelings and concerns. Listen actively and validate emotions to help provide support.
- 4. Set Realistic Goals**
Set achievable goals to foster a sense of accomplishment. Break larger tasks into manageable steps to prevent feeling overwhelmed.
- 5. Monitor Screens**
Set limits on recreational screen time to ensure it doesn't interfere with sleep, study and physical activity.
- 6. Encourage Social Connections**
Foster a sense of community by encouraging involvement in group projects, extracurriculars and school events.
- 7. Stay Informed & Involved**
Keep in touch with teachers and counselors to stay informed about your child's progress and any potential issues.
- 8. Build Resilience**
Encourage perseverance and a growth mindset. Help students view challenges as opportunities to learn and grow.
- 9. Model Positive Behavior**
Model healthy coping strategies and positive attitudes. Show empathy and patience, as children mimic adult behaviors.
- 10. Seek Help When Needed**
Be aware of signs such as changes in mood, behavior, or academic performance.

Practical ways to support your child's wellbeing

Having regular check-ins with your child often makes having the bigger conversations easier.

Make time and space for them to do things they enjoy so they strike a balance with school and homework. This will help them feel less overwhelmed by the challenges of school.

Make sure you and your child know who you can speak to if they're struggling and what support options are available in your child's school.

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Worried about going back to school? Need to talk to someone?

- Discussion Boards
- Kooth Magazine & Help Articles
- Free Counselling
- Journal & Self-Help Tools

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