

## Get in Gear for the School Year

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It's that time of year again. Yes, school is back in session. Is your child ready to succeed? Are you ready to help? It's a fact: Parents who play an active role in their children's education make a huge difference in their success. Here are some things you can do to help get the school year off to a great start:



- **Get the children to bed on time.** During the summer, children aren't always on a schedule. But, proper rest is essential for a healthy and productive school year. Help your child get used to the back-to-school routine: start the transition now to earlier wake-up times and bedtimes.
- **Communicate with teachers and the school.** Contact your child's teachers at the start of the school year. Get acquainted with them and let them know you want to be an active partner in helping your student to learn and grow. Plan to keep track of your child's subjects, homework, activities and progress throughout the school year. And, consider serving on your local PTA or joining other parent groups that engage with and support your child's school.
- **Provide for healthy meals.** Hungry kids can't concentrate on learning, so good nutrition plays an important role in your child's school performance. Studies show that children who eat healthy, balanced breakfasts and lunches do better in school. Fix nutritious meals at home, and, if you need extra help, find out if your family qualifies for any Child Nutrition Programs, like the National School Lunch Program.
- **Take your child to the doctor, and make sure your child has health insurance coverage.** It's a good idea to take your child in for a physical and an eye exam before school starts. Most schools require up-to-date immunizations, and you may be asked to provide paperwork showing that your child has all the necessary shots and vaccines. So, check your state's immunization requirements. And, always keep your own copies of any medical records.
- **Prepare a study area.** Set up a special place at home to do school work and homework. Remove distractions. Make it clear that education is a top priority in your family: show interest and praise your child's work.
- **Read together.** Pledge to read with your child for 20 minutes every day. Your example reinforces the importance of literacy, and reading lets you and your child explore new worlds of fun and adventure together.

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Source: U.S. Department of Education

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