



What You Need To Know...

Back To School Tips

The following health and safety tips are from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)

MAKING THE FIRST DAY EASIER

- Remind your child that she is not the only student who is a bit uneasy about the first day of school. Teachers know that students are anxious and will make an extra effort to make sure everyone feels as comfortable as possible.
- Point out the positive aspects of starting school: It will be fun. She'll see old friends and meet new ones. Refresh her positive memories about previous years, when she may have returned home after the first day with high spirits because she had a good time.
- Find another child in the neighborhood with whom your youngster can walk to school or ride with on the bus.

BACKPACK SAFETY

- Choose a backpack with wide, padded shoulder straps and a padded back.
- Pack light. Organize the backpack to use all of its compartments. Pack heavier items closest to the center of the back. The backpack should never weigh more than 10 to 20 percent of your child's body weight.
- Consider a rolling backpack. This type of backpack may be a good choice for students who must tote a heavy load. Remember that rolling backpacks still must be carried up stairs.

EATING DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

- Most schools regularly send schedules of cafeteria menus home. With this advance information, you can plan on packing lunch on the days when the main course is one your child prefers not to eat.
- Try to get your child's school to stock healthy choices such as fresh fruit, low-fat dairy products, water and 100 percent fruit juice in the vending machines.
- Each 12-ounce soft drink contains approximately 10 teaspoons of sugar and 150 calories. Drinking just one can of soda a day increases a child's risk of obesity by 60%. Restrict your child's soft drink consumption.

DEVELOPING GOOD HOMEWORK AND STUDY HABITS

- Create an environment that is conducive to doing homework. Youngsters need a permanent work space in their bedroom or another part of the home that offers privacy.
- Set aside ample time for homework.
- Establish a household rule that the TV set stays off during homework time.
- Supervise computer and internet use.
- Be available to answer questions and offer assistance, but never do a child's homework for her.

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"The school is the last expenditure upon which America should be willing to economize."
- Franklin D. Roosevelt



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