



## **Transitioning to a new school: tips for students**

Transitioning to a new school can be difficult. Whether it's the first day of elementary school, high school, or a whole new school community, starting a new school can impact a child's academic performance, social development, and mental state in the short term.

They're concerned about both the academic and the social curriculum. Will I be able to keep up with the work? How will I make new friendships like the ones I had at my old school? What if teachers work with students differently than I'm used to? Here are some tips to help your child get ready for the first day at his/her new school. If they're young, you may have to guide them through this journey. If they're entering middle school, pass these tips along and let them work through this independently.

**1) Get your school supplies together** - It's important to feel like you have what you need to be successful. Though it varies school by school, make sure you have a notebook or binder for each class, writing utensils, & anything else you may need. If your school has given you a list, then you're in luck; if not, be prepared to get more information on the first day.

**2) Learn as much as you can about your new school** - Learn as much as you can about your school in advance. You will feel more comfortable on that first day. Visit your school's website and poke around. You'll likely be using it a lot this year, so get a feel for where everything is. Read any handbooks or other important information provided. Talk to someone older than you who went to your school. Ask them questions about tips for getting around the building, how to act around certain teachers, or where to sit in the cafeteria.

**3) Attend orientation, if one is offered** - Most schools have orientations. Every school does it differently. Some schools might just give a brief tour, while other schools might also give you a bunch of supplies, like a map, schedule, library card, and uniform. Take the chance to walk around your new school, if you can. Following your schedule, go to each of your classrooms and your locker, if you've been assigned one, so you know where things are on that very first day.

**4) Get organized for your first day** - Lay out all of your notebooks, folders & school supplies. On the inside cover of your notebooks and folders, near the top, write in the subject you're using it for. If

possible, color-coordinate your subjects; math can be blue, English can be pink, and science can be zebra print! Express yourself! For any binders, label the side with its subject and decorate the front with pictures to make you smile. However you choose to do it, starting out organized will make for a less overwhelming first day.

**5) Connect with any old friends who will be attending the same school** - Talk to your friends before school starts and find out if you can head to school together on that first day. Whether you're riding the bus, walking, or getting there another way, you won't have to show up all by yourself. You'll feel less alone if you have friends by your side. If you're new to the school or don't have many friends yet, don't worry! You're not alone and you'll quickly make some friends of your own, once you attend classes and join sports teams or clubs with others who share your interests.

**6) Get a good night's sleep the night before school opens** - Though it may seem impossible to go to sleep the night before school, you can do some things to make it feel more doable. A couple of weeks or so before school starts, start getting yourself on a school schedule. Go to bed earlier than usual and gradually wake up earlier until you reach the time you will actually need to wake up at for school. Ease yourself into that schedule, so that the first day will find you wide awake and ready to start the new year.