



Back to School: Lunches, and books, and backpacks- oh my!

September is a month of mixed emotions and big feelings. It is a month defined by change and our ability to 'go with the flow.' We say goodbye to the long lazy days of summer, and hello to classrooms, extracurriculars, and maybe even homework. As creatures of habit that often thrive on routine, change can be difficult for both parents and children.

As we plunge into the chaos of the 'back to school' season, make sure to carve out some time for your family to discuss changes ahead of time and learn what to expect before school starts.

For some parents, this is the first time you will be dropping your child off at childcare, preschool or school. As your child navigates a new environment and social setting, you will likely also have a lot on your mind (wondering if he will make a new friend or follow her teacher's instructions). Take comfort in knowing these questions and feelings are normal. There are many parents out there that are navigating the same worries and challenges as you.

Before School Starts

There are a few things that you can do to ease the transition to school for your family:



- Visit the school together
- Find the school website to share pictures of the classroom, playground, and teacher
- If taking the bus, talk about what to expect
- Create opportunities to meet and play with other kids from their class
- Adjust bedtime to an hour that works with the school schedule

As you prepare, make sure to discuss any changes to your 'after school' routine too, since children may come home exhausted or with a few activities (aka homework!) to complete.

School Ready: On the Playground

When you think about 'back to school,' you may begin to picture traditional images of school buses, classrooms, desks, backpacks, and calculators. Yet, much of the learning that takes place at school happens on the playground. How your child relates to others in an unstructured social settings is just as important (if not more important) than her ability to tell you what $3 + 5$ is. Research shows that social-emotional skills are important for school success. Some of these skills include:

- Identifying emotions (for self, and others)
- Playing well with others
- Feeling good about yourself
- Following directions

For ways that you can help your child develop social-emotional skills, visit Zero to Three's resource <https://bit.ly/1s0hgI4>

School Ready: In the Classroom

There are many ways that you can help your child get ready for childcare or to start school.

- Read story books together
- Look at the pictures and words together and take turns turning pages
- Have back-and-forth conversations
- Play games where you practice taking turns with one another
- Talk about emotions - your own and your child's

If you are concerned about your child's progress in the classroom, schedule a time to talk to your child's teacher and learn about ways that you can help build these skills at home. Remember, as your child's first and most important teacher, you can demonstrate love, compassion, and empathy as your child navigates this important transition.

Don't Overdo It!

With all of the hype surrounding 'back to school' it is easy to overthink it, and overbook it. In addition to the daily grind with school and work, many parents feel motivated to top it off with a few extracurriculars (sports, music lessons, etc.,).

These are great activities for children, but if you or your child starts to feel overwhelmed, take a step back, ask for help, and create changes that work for your family.

Remember, it is important to focus on self-care too, so that you can be the parent you want to be!





Blog of the Month

No matter what school your child will be attending, September marks the start of the school year.... On the flipside, that means we still have a few more days of summer fun. Bottom line. . . enjoy them, that's your to-do list between now and when they start Kindergarten.

-- Read More --

Parent Education Near You

Incredible Years- Spanish

Tuesdays, Sept. 18-December 18th

5:30-8:30pm

Washington Elementary

777 E. Lincoln St

Woodburn, OR 97071

Call (971) 338-3627 to register

Abriendo Puertas/Opening Doors

Thursdays, Aug. 30-October 25th

11:00-1:00pm

St. Mary's Episcopal Church

1560 W. Hayes St

Woodburn, OR 97071

Call (503) 421-9090 or (503) 510-7038 to register



Nurturing Parenting

Fridays, October 5th. 6:00-8:00pm

The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints

783 Church St. W

Monmouth, Oregon, 97361

[Click here to register](#)

For additional classes in Marion county visit our [calendar!](#)

For additional classes in Polk county visit the Mid-Valley Parenting [calendar!](#)



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Search for the Daily Vroom app in the iTunes, Google Play or Amazon Fire stores.

OR

Sign up for weekly brain building text message by texting CHILD to 48258.

Vroom Tip

Encourage your child to make a Play Plan before he begins to pretend to play. Ask questions about where he is and who he is pretending to be. See if he can come up with what he will do first, next, and after that. Afterward, talk about how the Play Plan worked out.

More Vroom Tips