



### **A Smooth Transition Back to School**

The long days of summer are coming to a close, signaling the coming of Fall. The beginning of September is always filled with nerves and anxious feelings. As parents, you want to make sure you have done all that you can for your children so they are ready and able to thrive in school. Studies have shown that encouraging family involvement in education may improve children's academic outcomes. But exactly what does that mean for parents, what can you do?

Preparing your children for school involves more than the ABC's and 1-2-3's. Research shows that children who have parents that are responsive to their children's needs and concerns do better in school. Children can feel scared, happy, sad, excited and nervous about starting school.

Parents you can help your children by talking about what school will be like, what they will do during the day, what their teacher will be like, and strategies if they start to miss home. Below are some tips to talk with your child about starting school:

## How to Talk to Your Kids

- Talk with your children about what their new school will be like and what their teacher will be like.
- Listen to your children's worries about school, and come up with solutions before they start school.
- Be excited! Show your children school is something to look forward to, not something to be afraid of.

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### Back to school, new routines at home

When children enter school not only are they getting used to the school environment, but they might also have some new routines at home. It can be hard for children to adjust to all of these changes at once. Parents you can help your child by introducing new routines in your home this weekend before school starts.

- Start new bed times and wake up times with your children. This will help get your sleep schedule ready for school, and help prevent overly tired children in the first few days.
- If your child will be taking the bus, walk with them to the bus stop. Talk about safe ways to get on and off the bus.
- Will your child be attending an after school program? If so, talk about how they will come from the program.
- Decide how you might want your child to handle any work brought home Will that be done right when they get home, at an after school program, after dinner, or at some other point in time? Practice this quiet "work time" at home with reading or some other activity so they know what to expect.

By preparing your child for what home will be like before they start school, children will be dealing with fewer transitions at once, making new school routines a bit easier to deal with.

**For more articles like this one see**

[Oregon Parenting Together](#)

**Missing  
School  
ADDS UP**  
1 in 4 Oregon students  
miss more than 18 days.



**2 days a month = 18 days a year X 9 years of school = 1 Year of school**

**Missing 2 days a month for 9 years is nearly a full year of missed learning.**

**Sometimes Parent Misconceptions About Attendance Unknowingly Affect Students**  
By Sean Aker, Regional Capacity Builder serving the Willamette Region

In March, when Lexi's first grade teacher was helping her prepare for student-led parent conferences, Lexi's teacher asked the first grader if there was anything she'd like to tell her mom about school. Lexi did want to share something she had been thinking about a lot, she was upset that she missed school so often. Lexi's teacher agreed to help her plan the conversation she would have with her mom.

As a kindergartener, even though she usually showed up to school within the first 30 minutes, Lexi was late to school 72 times. That same year, Lexi missed 37 half-days of school. Now, as a first grader, coming into spring parent teacher conferences, Lexi already had 55 tardies and 22 half-day absences.

At conferences, Lexi reported her academic progress to her mom, and then, at the end of Lexi's presentation, her teacher asked Lexi if there was anything else she wanted to say. Lexi sat up straight and said, "Mom, I want to quit being late to school."

When presented with the numbers, Lexi's mom was surprised by the total number of tardies and absences. She said, "I knew I was getting her to school late, but I thought to myself, 'at least I'm getting her to school.'"

Lexi and her teacher had an idea. If Lexi was on time for school at least 19 of the next 20 school days, Lexi would celebrate with her class and they would all have rootbeer floats. Over the next twenty days, Lexi arrived early for school, everyday. Her principal was there to greet her and reported that Lexi came to school smiling, excited and eager for school. When asked what she liked most about getting to school on time, Lexi said, "I get recess before school, and reading is easier."

When kids miss school, for excused or unexcused reasons, they miss out on academic and social opportunities that they can never get back. And, students who are chronically absent in the early

grades, missing 10% of school or more, are very likely to be struggling readers.

Missing only two school days a month quickly adds up. Those 18 days missed account for more than 10% of school days! Missing that much school has a lasting impact on students.

It's important to let your school know if your child isn't feeling comfortable at school. It's also important to set up appointments on non-school days or after school, whenever possible.

It can take years of intervention and additional support for a child who is chronically absent in early grades to catch up with peers. Prevention is the best medicine. And, for most kids, prevention starts when they #showup to school.

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**September is  
Be a Food Hero Month!**

**Show us how your family  
Food Hero family!**

**There are lots of ways to be a  
Food Hero!**

*Here are a few:*

1. Try a new food! If you're not ready to taste it, try it by looking at it, touching it or smelling it!
2. Brighten your plate with vegetables of different colors!
3. Have fruit for dessert!

Email a photo to [carly.kristofik@oregonstate.edu](mailto:carly.kristofik@oregonstate.edu)! The photo does not have to show faces. It can show hands on a shopping list or dinner plates—be creative! We never share a photo without your ok!



*Food Hero family  
preparing a healthy recipe*



**Visit [Foodhero.org](http://Foodhero.org) to find low-cost, healthy, tasty and simple recipes!**

This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - SNAP. For information on nutrition assistance through Oregon SNAP contact Oregon SNAP contact Oregon SNAP at 21. USDA is an equal opportunity provider. Oregon State University Extension Service is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer.

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### Blog of the Month

“Don't blink!” They say...“before you know it, he'll be graduating high school!” Well...he may not quite be there yet, but last week my son headed off to “Kinder Camp” for a

week to learn a little bit about his new school before he goes for real in about a month. We're definitely feeling a mix of emotions in our house, but the feeling I feel the most right now is pride.



[--Read More--](#)

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## Upcoming Parenting Classes

Incredible Years  
Thursdays, August 8 - December 12, 2019  
5:30-8:00pm  
Morningside United Methodist Church  
3674 12th St SE Salem, OR 97302  
Call (858) 776-5347 or email  
[morningsideprogram@gmail.com](mailto:morningsideprogram@gmail.com) to  
register



For future classes in Marion County visit our [calendar!](#)

For future classes in Polk County  
visit [Mid-Valley Parenting](#)

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Do you want fun easy activities that help your child learn? Download the **FREE** Vroom smartphone app for activities and learn the science behind early brain development. Available in English and Spanish.

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**

At snack time, exercise your child's five senses. Let her taste a piece of the snack and ask how it tastes, then have her smell it and tell you what she smells. Talk about the shape of it and how it feels to the touch. You can smell and taste it too.

**[More Vroom Tips](#)**

