

Avoiding back-to-school disasters

(These items listed below are things that were recommended by Missie Mayhem as contained in her August 9, 2017 article from Great Schools):

Child and education experts weigh in on how to prep kids for a drama-free first day:

- “Talk positively about the pending school experience. Parents’ emotions are easily read by children who pick up on parental fears, sadness about separation, or concerns about their child’s adjustment. Drive by or visit the school to build familiarity. Shop together for school supplies or clothes. Treat going to school as a wonderful new adventure. — Kay Neff, founder of the Dearborn Heights Montessori Center in Michigan
- “Start getting them back on their school-time schedule slowly — about a week ahead of the first day. For example, put them to bed 10 minutes earlier and wake them up 10 minutes earlier.” — Heidi Waterfield, educational consultant
- “The night before, prepare lunches and snacks and set out clothes and backpacks. If you’re unsure of the school’s snack policy, send extra food with your child just in case.” — Julie Rebboah, president of Lightning Bug Learning Corporation
- “Many parents like to accompany their child to school on the first day, but that is not always possible. If this is a big issue for you *and* your child, you could certainly slip a note in a lunch box or backpack or in with some new school supplies. It’s a little way of being there without being there.” — Aviva Pflock, coauthor of *Mommy Guilt: Learn to Worry Less, Focus on What Matters Most, and Raise Happier Kids*
- “If you have allowed screen time privileges to increase over the summer, begin to curtail them (at least two weeks) prior to the start of school. Establish TV, video, and computer use rules before the first day of school, and stick to them.” — Connie Hammer, certified parent coach
- “Do not drop off your child and leave. Your job is to make sure all the child’s concerns have been addressed before you leave them anywhere! No matter how ridiculous you think the concern is, pay attention to it and walk them through it.” — Doris Jeanette, child psychologist
- “If your child is anxious about going to school, don’t freak out if your child’s anxiety escalates into screaming and crying, ‘I won’t go!’ Remain calm, cool, and collected. Your steadiness will calm your child. Don’t say, ‘You have to handle it alone.’ Anxiety makes kids feel frightened and isolated. Instead, tell your child that you are a team. Say, ‘You’re not alone, and together we’re going to solve this problem and help you feel better.’” — Diane Peters Mayer, author of *Overcoming School Anxiety*