

Families are preparing to send their children back to school, after a period of online learning, and being away from the familiarity of school, attending classes and spending time friends. Some will have become used to the routine of being at home. Now returning to school children will be readjusting to school routines once again.

Here are some recommendations to help children transition back to school:

- Keep children informed about the timeline for returning back to school, as it will be staggered with certain year groups returning in different weeks, therefore for some young people school may seem empty on return, whereas for others most students will be back if they are returning later.
- Inform children how they will get to school. For example, what transport will they take – will they catch a bus, be driven, ride their bikes etc.
- Review timetables for classes and breaks. Spend time highlighting any changes in timetables provided by the school. For example,
- Drive or for a walk past your school. Start a conversation with your child about what they are looking forward to on their return, or any possible concerns they may have.
- Validate concerns as a possible cause of worry. Provide reassurance when able or look towards resolving concerns, perhaps by having discussions with key staff at the school who may be able to provide assistance.
- Discuss some of the activities children will be doing when they get back to school and who they will see again. Ask your child to identify peers they may connect with who can be a support group for them at school.
- When possible try not to introduce any new routines at home during the time of readjustment.
- Let children have familiar items to take with them to school (if not a school related item always check if your child can bring such items to school).
- Keep explanations simple. Communicate openly about feelings about the move back to school (both positive and negative).
- Discuss any concerns children may have in relation to COVID-19, such as their health; worry about other people's health. Use the resources available from government websites or provided by your school to help these discussion

As your child or young person transitions back to school, remember you can seek assistance by contacting school staff with any concerns or questions you have about the return.