

# Tips for Supporting Your Child Going Back to School During COVID-19

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More schools are moving back towards in-person learning. Some children may do well with the transition and others may need some extra support. Here are tips for supporting your children as they go back to school.

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## Help ensure everyone's health and safety

It is important to monitor your child's health each morning before school. If they seem sick, check for fever. If they have a fever over 100.4, do not send them to school.

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## Before going back to school, teach your children how to:

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### Distance from others

- Teach your child by using physical cues to show them what distance means.
  - Show them how to measure distance by stretching out their arms.
  - Use a Hula hoop or place a jump rope or tape on the floor to show how much space is best.
  - Teach kids how to wave and say "hi" instead of hugging.
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### Wear a mask

- Children over 2 years should wear a mask around people who do not live in their home.
  - Masks should fit snugly without restricting breathing and cover mouth and nose.
  - It can be helpful to wear a mask for short times at first. Over time, kids get more comfortable in masks for longer periods.
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### Wash hands

- Handwashing should last 20 seconds.
  - Use songs to help children spend the full 20 seconds washing their hands.
  - Example songs are the "happy birthday" song twice or the alphabet (ABC) song.
  - Wash all parts of hands (under fingernails, thumbs, and the back sides of hands) with warm water and soap.
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**Practice distancing, masking, and handwashing at home before going to school. You can turn these into games to make them more fun!**

### To Learn More

- Psychiatry and Behavioral Medicine  
206-987-2164
- Ask your child's healthcare provider
- [seattlechildrens.org](http://seattlechildrens.org)

### Free Interpreter Services

- In the hospital, ask your nurse.
- From outside the hospital, call the toll-free Family Interpreting Line, 1-866-583-1527. Tell the interpreter the name or extension you need.

### **Give emotional support and build behaviors**

Going back to school can cause kids to feel happy, worried, or other emotions.

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### **As you get ready to start back to school, it is important to:**

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#### **Listen to feelings**

- Listen to your children's feelings. If your child says they're worried, tell them it's normal to worry but don't add to their anxiety.
  - Use statements such as "I know you're nervous about going back to school, and your teachers are going to make sure that the classroom is safe."
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#### **Build routines**



- Rebuilding school routines is helpful for going back to school. Work with your child's teachers to make sure there is a routine at school, too.
  - Use picture versions of routines or spoken instructions to help children understand routines.
  - Practice these routines before the first day of school.
  - Use the Morning Routine Chart on page 3 to help your child get organized.
  - Tell children about any changes, do not surprise them! It can be helpful to discuss changes with teachers or other school staff.
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#### **Give rewards**

- Reward children for specific, good behaviors. Rewards can be praise, extra play time, or fun items.
  - For example, tell them they can have 5 minutes of game time for practicing handwashing.
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## Morning Routine Chart

Use this morning routine chart to show your child the steps for getting ready in the morning. Have them check off each task they complete. When they finish the list, they will earn a reward.

| To do  |   | Done                     |
|--|---|--------------------------|
| Restroom   |    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Throw away pull up   |    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Underwear  |    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Pants on   |    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Shirt on   |    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Medications  |    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Breakfast  |   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Brush teeth  |  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Socks  |  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Shoes  |  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Backpack   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>Child's choice</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listen to one song</li> <li>• A short game with mom</li> <li>• Extra Xbox/screen time after school</li> </ul> |  | <input type="checkbox"/> |