



Reduce Teenage Back-To-School Anxiety

- 1 Build confidence with information**

Make sure your student has their daily class and activity schedule and go over it with them. Check out information online about their classes or, if they are going to a new school, their school website. If they have any pressing questions that can't be answered on the website, encourage them to email a teacher or school administrator.
- 2 Ease into the schedule**

Start gradually encouraging them to wake up closer to the time they will need to be up for school. Encourage good sleep habits and going to bed early too!
- 3 Healthy eating and exercising**

While healthy behaviors are always important, at times of stress they can really help keep your teen (and yourself) regulated. Setting up good habits before you get busy during the school year will help you maintain them later.
- 4 Encourage problem solving**

While you may be looking forward to your teen going to school, they may not be. Give them space to air their concerns and frustrations without offering them your solutions. Sometimes simply listening and honoring how they feel can allow them to move through the anxiety. If they are expressing a problem, encourage them to come up with their own solutions. You can help them fine tune their own ideas or simply ask, "Is there something I can do to help you with this?"
- 5 Quality Time**

If your child is going to a new school or a boarding school, this may mean helping them say goodbye to friends, former teachers, or family. Encourage them to find meaningful ways to connect with the important people in their lives before they start a new chapter. You can also help them think of ways to stay in touch.



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Materials

Find out what kind of things your child may need for the school year. Does the school have a dress code? Does your teen like certain kinds of pens or pencils? Do they need help sorting through what to bring to boarding school or college? Having things organized and packed ahead of time may help them feel more prepared.

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Positive talk

Help your teen list things they are looking forward to during the school year. You can share what you are excited about too!

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Set goals

Set some goals together for the school year. Try to keep the goals realistic, attainable, and fun – perhaps even leave grades out of it. Things like “trying something new,” “making a new friend,” or “communicating better with teachers” are great goals for any student. Sharing your own goals for the year can be helpful, too. Checking in with your teen through the year on the goals they set is a great way to help them stay on track.

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Be prepared for the rough patches

If your teen is starting at a new school or even just a new year, they will inevitably have rough moments when they may vent, cry, or even ask to switch schools. Many times, they may just need you to hear their concerns and then they are able to move on. Help them be ready for when things are hard by brainstorming some things they can do ahead of time. For example, if your child is easily overwhelmed by school work, help them create a plan of action for when they begin to feel like the workload is too much.