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Back to School

Is your child starting a new school or grade and anxious about the transition? This can be a very difficult time for many children, and they often have a difficult time dealing with their feelings. Here is some advice to help your child during this time.

Start talking about the change well in advance.

Most kids get more nervous about not knowing what is going to happen. Their anxiety will be lessened if you speak frankly and directly about the change. Answer all questions that you can, and be honest when you don't know.

But don't dwell on it!

Always follow your child's lead. Many children will process and work through a major change in small pieces, so they may raise the issue frequently but will not want to talk about it for a significant amount of time. Each time they talk about the change, their anxiety may decrease even further.

Visit the new school.

Visiting the new school, or even driving by or walking around the building, can help decrease anxiety.

Again, the visit may be brief; your child may not want to dwell on the imminent transition, but a short visit may serve to decrease their anxiety.

Connect with a person.

If possible, make some connection to a person who will be in the child's new class, either a teacher or an aide or another child. One familiar face can do a lot in terms of easing a child's anxiety about an environmental change like this.

Point out to the child past accomplishments.

Most children have already negotiated an environmental change at least (con't on page 2)

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Back to School (con't)

once before. Make comparisons for the child to these other situations in order to build confidence. Remind the child of previous daycare changes or enrollment in a new after school activity or sport. Chances are they have already learned how to learn new routines, make new friends, and be successful in a new environment.

Remember that you can't "fix" their uncomfortable feelings.

Planned transitions and changes may be uncomfortable, but they do not hurt or "traumatize" children. When kids are told what's going to happen by people they trust, are listened to with empathy by their caretakers, and are allowed to express their feelings about the situation, they are able to process changes in a healthy manner. These are important skills for kids to develop. We can't avoid, minimize, or "fix" anxiety-provoking transitions. We can support our children as they develop skills to deal with these issues.

Express pride!

Once your child seems settled in the new environment, point out to them how well they handled the situation and how you will always be there to help them through similar situations. Reinforce the skills they will need for the next big change!



Fall Schedule

It's that time of year again and we are trying to solidify our Fall therapy schedules. If you have not already done so, please talk to your child's therapist as soon as possible about Fall scheduling.

Beth Ciangiulli will be on vacation from September 5th through 21st and Rachelle Maisel will be on vacation from September 16th through 20th. In our absence, Carol Liu (mailbox 3) will be checking voicemail and returning calls as necessary.



There are a few new therapists working for Stepping Stones Therapy this Fall. This means a busier waiting room and parking lot, especially in the afternoons. Please read the information about parking to ensure that you know where parking is available during your child's therapy session. Also, please supervise your children in the waiting room so they do not disrupt other therapy sessions. Thanks for your cooperation!!