

Research Committee
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Hello, I hope everyone had a wonderful summer. I'm on the research committee this year. If anyone has a topic they would like me to research I would be happy to do it. Please just give me a call or send me an e-mail. If there is something you are struggling with such as potty training multiples, dealing with tantrums etc., I'm sure there are other mothers dealing with the same issues, so don't hesitate to give me suggestions.

My children are going to start kindergarten in a week and I'm nervous about how my mornings are going to go. I can see myself running down the street after the bus with book bags swinging, a kid in each hand and me screaming, "Wait!!". To avoid that kind of stress I decided to do research on how to get kids ready for school in the morning. Hopefully you will find a great piece of advice in this article that will make your mornings run smooth all school year long.

How To Get Kids Ready For School In The Morning

Here are some suggestions I found...

1. Make Breakfast Special

"I have a problem with getting my daughter to school on time. It's funny how she drags on school mornings, but on the weekend she is up at the crack of dawn to watch cartoons! I have noticed that if I buy a special breakfast food, such as toaster strudel, bacon, or cantaloupe, she is more eager to get up."

2.. Dispelling Tension

"My friend used to promise her daughter 10 minutes of 'mommy time' (a story, a craft, a quickie manicure) if her daughter was ready in plenty of time. She said it worked like a charm, and made both of them calm before starting school and work. The trick is the follow-through--you must always be prepared to do it if she's ready on time. In order to get my kids ready for school on time (we are not morning people!) I have to have absolutely everything done the night before. If I have to make a decision or find a shoe or sign a paper at 7 a.m., I'm sunk. And to keep my kids upbeat-particularly at the beginning of the year when they may be nervous about school, I let them make choices (clothes, breakfast, lunchbox, etc.) so they feel in control. We also try to be ready early and on time to school so there's tension about getting there on time. If they think you're tense, they think something's scary about where they're going."

3. Prepare Ahead of Time

This one cannot be stressed enough. It helps to prepare everything the night before. If clothing, shoes, and backpacks are ready the night before, this will make for an easier morning. If a child is searching frantically for shoes in the morning, it will certainly take away precious time. If your child likes to pick his or her own clothing, be sure it is done the night before. Also, showers or baths can be taken right before bed to cut down on getting ready in the morning.

4. Make Quick Breakfasts on School Days

Quick breakfasts can still be healthy if you choose the right items and they will make for less stress and more time to get ready. For instance, a breakfast of toast, fruit, and yogurt is one healthy option that will only take a few moments to prepare.

5. Pack Lunches the Night Before

If your child brings lunches to school, consider packing lunches the night before.

6. Sign Papers the Night Before

This will go hand in hand with the following tip, but always be sure to check for and sign papers ahead of time. These should be placed in the backpack as soon as they are signed, so that they are where they need to be. This saves time hunting for them in the morning.

7. Be Sure Your Child's Backpack Is Checked Ahead Of Time

A backpack should always be checked right after your child gets home from school. However, if the parent getting the child ready in the morning is not the person who is there after school or if your children are in childcare after school, checking the backpack may slip your mind at times. You never know when there might be an important note or a forgotten homework paper. Be sure to check the backpack the night before, preferably as soon as possible, in case there is forgotten homework.

Getting kids out the door in the morning:

1 Begin to adjust sleep schedules 10 days before school starts. Set a firm wake-up time, even on weekends, and also for teens. Limit late nights. "Often, insomnia can be a habit," says clinical psychologist Ruth Peters. "Kids expect to have difficulty falling asleep at night, so they do." To help, keep bedrooms as dark as is comfortable and remove electronic devices. Also, kids should avoid caffeinated drinks after lunch; young bodies take longer to process caffeine.

2. Use light and sound. Find a wake-up radio station, "the more annoying and loud, the better," Peters says. Expose kids to bright light to get them awake and moving. Open curtains, eat breakfast in a sunny room, and don't let teens sulk behind sunglasses.

3. Play games. Set a timer for brushing teeth and getting dressed. If your child beats the buzzer all week, offer a special breakfast or Saturday surprise.

4. Make "me" time in the a.m. Wake up 30 minutes earlier than the kids so you can check e-mail, read headlines and set goals. You'll feel better and set the morning's tone with your good mood.

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