



Back-to-School Anxiety: A Parent & Caregiver Guide

♥ A New School Year, A Mix of Emotions

Welcome back to a new school year!! While this can be a very exciting time, it's also normal for children to feel nervous about returning to school. New teachers, classmates and routines can bring lots of uncertainty. With encouragement and consistency, children can build the confidence they need for a successful start.

👁️ Signs Your Child May Be Feeling Anxious

Anxiety doesn't always look like tears or worrying out loud. Often, stress shows up in unexpected ways that can easily be confused with everyday moodiness. Your child might not even realize why they are feeling overwhelmed or know how to put it into words.

Your child may:

🤒 **Complain of Physical Pain:** headaches, stomach aches, or feeling sick before school

😴 **Have Trouble Sleeping:** struggling to fall asleep or wake up, having nightmares

🗑️ **Avoid Talking:** shutting down, changing the subject, or refusing to talk about school

😡 **Be Irritable or Withdrawn:** snapping over small things, mood swings, or pulling away

🤗 **Become Extra Clingy:** more emotional and seek extra reassurance

☀️ How You Can Help

If you're noticing any of these changes, don't worry! Here are a few gentle steps that you can take to help them navigate those feelings:

📅 **Keep routines consistent:** Regular bedtimes, morning routines, and preparing for school the night before can help children feel secure.

💬 **Talk about feelings and Listen:** Ask open questions like, *"What are you looking forward to?"*, *"Is there anything you're worried about?"* and remember to listen, validate their feelings, and remind them that it's okay to feel nervous.

👉 **Build confidence:** Remind your child of times they successfully handled something new or challenging.

🧘 **Practice calming strategies together**

Things to Try:

- Deep breathing
 - Counting slowly to 10
 - Positive self-talk (*"I can do hard things"*)
 - Stretching or taking a movement break
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🤝 Working Together

If your child is struggling, connect with their teacher. Sharing helpful information and strategies allows home and school to work as a team.

♥ Remember

Children don't need every challenge removed; they need caring adults who help them believe they can face those challenges. Together, we can help every child feel safe, confident, and ready to learn.

For more resources to support your child's mental health, [click here!](#)

Wishing your family a wonderful school year!