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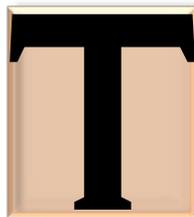
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Back-to-School: Tips on Making the Transition



he new school year is upon us, and while some children thrive on the excitement of it all, many feel incredibly overwhelmed. Parents too! Transitioning to a new grade level isn't easy—especially when entering middle school or high school—but these tips will help get the year off to a pretty good start.

The single most important thing you can do is talk to your child about the months ahead. What are his or her hopes? What might be the biggest concern about moving up a grade? Get the chat started by prompting them to say what they're most looking forward to. You might then be inclined to ask, "What are you nervous about?" However, the question may get a brave soldier's response: "Nothing." Instead, inquire casually about what they're "NOT looking forward to."

However surprising the honest answer may be, it's important to keep a light, positive attitude. No matter what topic you discuss, each is a great opportunity for a meaningful conversation.

Resuming your family's regular school routine before classes begin is another way to ease the transition. Set bedtime for 15 minutes earlier each night until you reach a reasonable school-night hour. This goes for morning wakeup as well. If your child's sleep schedule is back on track in the week before school starts, you can bet that he or she will be actually present when the bell rings.

Get back on a reading schedule, too. Make a trip to your local library for new reading ideas. Many libraries have recommended reading lists for each grade level—a great way to preview the upcoming year!

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Balancing Schoolwork and Extracurricular Activities

By *Tim McCann*

When I was in school, it was often challenging to find the right balance between academics and extracurricular activities. On one hand, there were my teachers and parents expecting me to complete every assignment, and on the other hand were the expectations of coaches and other trainers: meetings and lessons, hours of practice, preparing for the big event... To alleviate stress and anxiety, students need a healthy balance between the two. After all, colleges are looking for students with not just academic excellence, but with a well-rounded background in teamwork and leadership skills.

To head the imbalance off at the pass, first develop a schedule that accommodates both class assignments and added activities. Grades are paramount as students move into high school and college, but time spent participating in the arts or sports

will mean staying fit, both mentally and physically. When creating this schedule, be sure to allow for more academic work than extracurricular, but also build in enough breaks to prevent loss of attention span or physical burnout.

Be careful, too, when choosing between all those extracurricular activities. I wouldn't advise attempting every activity under the sun, as I myself had tried to do. Instead, weigh the benefits of each. Sit down with your child and discuss which activities seem most attractive to him or her. Then create a list of their pros and cons. Consider, for instance, whether that sport, or piano lesson, or spot on the debate team is something that fits in with whatever field they would like to go into (even if that changes a dozen times over the years).

It may seem obvious, but setting goals and meeting them—both academically and in extracurricular activities—is a key to your child's future success. That being said, make sure that the



Tim McCann, Regional Franchise Manager at JEI Learning Center

goals are realistic; if a goal proves unattainable, it can lead to a self-consciousness that may prevent further effort. If this has happened before, have a talk with your son or daughter about taking on too much, rather than dwell on it as a personal failure.

Finally, it's important to allow children the time to do whatever they truly enjoy doing, whether that be riding a bike, watching a favorite TV show, or just hanging out with a friend. In the long run, these little escapes can have big benefits physically, mentally, and academically. Again, it's about balance. Remind your go-getter to hang in there.

JEI FACEBOOK FAN PROMOTION

Encourage academic growth in your children by enrolling in JEI. LIKE us at <http://www.facebook.com/jeilearningcenter> for a chance to win an Amazon Kindle Fire HD Tablet when we reach

2,000 

BRIEFS

Education Could Mean Bad Vision

Johannes Gutenberg University is linking nearsightedness to the number of years spent in school. Vision problems, their study reports, have less to do with genetics than with “up-close” activities like reading or computer use. However, spending time outdoors may reduce the effect.

(www.educationnews.org, 08/2014)

Digital Writing: Young Students Can Do It

A study conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics has revealed that 4th graders’ organizational and typing skills are sufficient for assessing computer-based writing assignments. Elyse Eidman-Aadahl, executive director of the National Writing Project, says the findings are significant “because to be a writer today is to write in a digital environment.”

(www.eschoolnews.com, 08/2014)

Neuroscience and the Reading Brain

Neuroscientists at Dartmouth University’s Reading Brains Laboratory are challenging the “fourth-grade shift,” the notion that 4th-graders stop learning to read once they start reading to learn. While the shift has long been affirmed by teachers and behavioral psychologists, neuroscientist Dana Coch is skeptical. Coch’s researchers studied 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students through the use of electrodes that measure brain response to words and strings of symbols. Their study revealed that even 5th-grade students could not automatically determine whether the symbols formed an actual word. “Automaticity is key to learning to read,” says Coch. “If you’re using a lot of effort to decode and understand individual words,” she argues, “you have fewer resources for comprehension.”

(www.npr.org, 08/2014)

(Back-to-School: Seven Tips on Making the Transition continued from page 1)

Go over the school schedule. Will there be a new pick-up time? Is your child going to be in an after-school program or walking home with friends for the first time? Knowing the exact times school begins and ends, and when he or she will be picked up (and by whom) can instantly help your child feel more relaxed.

Another way to reduce anxiety is to arrange a meet-up with current friends or slightly older children from the neighborhood. Seeing familiar faces and speaking with others who have “been there, done that” can give a child the confidence to tackle tougher assignments—and to navigate new peer relationships.

Orientation days are a must, as they offer the chance to learn about grade level requirements, school regulations, and other unknowns (such as how your child will sign up for classes in high school). These may be different from a former school. When you visit, take a tour of the grounds so your child is familiar with the various buildings. Middle and high schools can have large and overwhelming campuses. A quick walk around can do wonders to make these formidable spaces seem friendlier.

Last but hardly least: plan a special after-school activity—maybe a relaxing drive to get ice cream—and discuss how the first day went. This is a chance to follow up on that earlier talk, as well as to let your child know how important he or she is to you. The new school year is a time of change for everyone. Stay positive, stay involved, and the year will progress beautifully.

THE BACK-TO-SCHOOL SEASON

EXCITED TEACHERS



How many teachers will be entering classrooms this year?

28.5 MILLION

and that's today's estimate only for primary education!

USA	1.8M
Canada	1.4M
China	6M
Russia	300,000
UK	246,000
Poland	240,000
Spain	220,000
Japan	400,000
Australia	106,000
India	3.4M
Nigeria	575,000

NERVOUS STUDENTS



Many kids feel nervous or a little scared on the first day of school because of many new things. Some of them may even have headaches or stomachaches caused by stress.



TOP 5 WORST EXPECTATIONS from elementary school students?

Homework	████████████████████
Switching schools	██████████████████
Getting up early	██████████████████
Tests	██████████████████
Math	██████████████████

AGITATED PARENTS



Psychologists advise anxious parents to practice 3 things: a good night's sleep the night before (for both kids and parents), a healthy breakfast, and a positive outlook.

MONEY MATTERS:

MAJORITY OF PARENTS WILL SPEND MORE THAN

\$100 per child

MOST POPULAR BACK-TO-SCHOOL ITEMS:

Clothing, shoes, school supplies, backpacks, computers or tablets

Back to School with JEI!

Be back-to-school ready with JEI's comprehensive curriculum. Aligned with Common Core State Standards, our workbooks in Math, English, Reading & Writing, Problem Solving Math, and the new critical and creative thinking program, Brain Safari, offer children the academic boost they need – all year round!

Children who began JEI's Brain Safari this past summer are enjoying the workbooks' fun,

stimulating activities, which greatly improve cognitive skills and memory proficiency.

Students may enroll in any JEI program simultaneously, so take a look, weigh your options, and determine which combination would best suit your child's needs for the new year.

For more information, please email lahq@jeilearning.com or visit us at www.jeilearning.com.



Student of the Month



Congratulations to Ashley Jung from JEI Learning Center South San Jose! Ashley has just graduated from middle school as valedictorian. She received the 2014 President's Education Award, along with a letter signed by



President Barack Obama! When Ashley moved to the U.S. from Korea in 2nd grade, she was enrolled in JEI's Math and English programs. She hasn't missed a day of class at JEI. Ashley's determination and great achievements make her a true role model for everyone.

Upcoming JEI Learning Centers

- East Brunswick, NJ**
- Floral Park-Little Neck, NY**
- Glen Rock, NJ**
- Gravesend, NY**
- Lynbrook-Hewlett, NY**
- Millbrae, CA**

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Merrick
Rego Park
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