

How to Prepare Your Student to Go Back to School



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If your child could use a little help getting back into the school swing of things, there are a number of simple things you can do to make the transition easier. "Take steps these final few weeks of summer to help your student prepare mentally and otherwise for a new school year," advises Erica Hwang of the Bothell Huntington Learning Center.

Hwang offers these tips to ready children for the first day and week of school:

Call up friends. If your child hasn't seen classmates from last year all summer, now is a great time to arrange a few activities with school friends. If you know students who will be in your child's class, encourage your child to reach out to them, too.

Make a school visit. Stop by the school at least once to let your child walk around and check out his or her new classroom, if possible. If your child has an opportunity to meet staff members and his or her new teacher (at back-to-school night or in another way), take advantage.

Go over the routine. If your summer routine has been relaxed, now is the time to remind your child how a typical school day will go. If needed, start enforcing a reasonable bedtime a few weeks before school starts. Hang a family schedule and/or calendar in a visible place.

Get the home organized. Keep hooks near the entry door to your home where your child can keep the backpack, jacket and other school gear. Have him or her organize his or her desk or homework area. Take your child shopping to restock school and organizational supplies for the home and the classroom. Don't forget to buy a new planner for him or her to use to stay on top of all obligations and assignments.

Do some refresher work. The final few weeks of summer, incorporate a little school work into your child's daily schedule, using workbooks or worksheets from last year to brush up on math, reading and other basics. To practice writing, have your child keep a daily journal on the things he or she did this summer. As you bump up bedtime, include reading in the nightly routine — letting your child choose books from the library.

Sit down to talk about goals. Goal setting can be a powerful tool. Talk with your child about the things that he or she would like to accomplish or change this school year—academic or otherwise. If your child had any difficulties last year, let him or her know that you are there to help and want to maintain open communication about school.

When it comes to preparing for back to school, a little can go a long way. "Back to school preparation is largely about getting in the right mindset," says Hwang. "Help your child prepare by talking positively about this coming school year and the good things to come. Remind your child of the best parts of school, and also let him or her know that you're always there to help problem solve when issues arise."

For more information about Huntington Learning Center: bothellwa@hlcmail.com.

Using Your Intuition to Keep Your Child's Love for Learning Alive

Submitted By Dr. Melodee Loshbaugh, Executive Director, Brock's Academy

Children love to learn. In fact, you can't stop them from learning; it's inherent in their very being. They bounce through their first handful of years tasting, smelling, touching and listening to everything they possibly can; they are authentically in love with learning.

The key for parents is to acknowledge this inherent love for learning and make sure they select the right people, places and circumstances to continually support their children as they venture out into the world. The good news is we haven't been left to our own devices. We've been given a tool to help keep our children's love for learning alive and well: intuition!

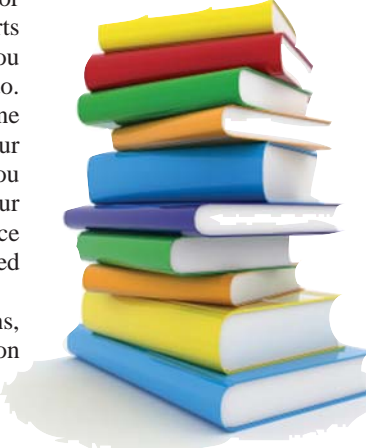
Throughout my career, I've spent hours coaching parents about the power of intuition when raising and educating our children. My message is always the same, "the most important thing you can

do for your child is to trust and follow your intuition." It doesn't matter how much formal education you have, how much research shows you should be doing this or that, or how many experts with PhDs are telling you what you need to do or not do. At the end of the day, no one knows what's best for your child better than you. If you follow your intuition, your child will be in the right place getting exactly what they need 100 percent of the time.

As I was raising my sons, Brock and Gabe, this intuition was my preemptive comfort. It made me aware and cautious of potential hazards, told me to take numerous head counts while at the park, and allowed me to look in on them just one more time before going to bed at night. Once my children were in school, it let me know which teacher could provide the best possible learning environment, which adults truly had my children's best interests at heart, and in no uncertain terms, if something

was going on in my child's education that was tampering with their love for learning instead of honoring it.

I trusted my intuition, even



when it meant I had to buck the system with its scary rules and intimidating people. I trusted it even when I didn't have any facts, logic or wordy rationales to back it up.

Once, it actually spoke to me and told me to pick up a phone and call home just in time to find out that one of my boys had been in a terrible bike accident.

It wasn't a literal voice (although I have talked with parents that have had this experience) but more

of a knowing feeling that something wasn't right. In this case, it prompted me to ask the clerk in the store if I could use her phone (this was way before cell phones).

I experience my intuition as a feeling — a sort of hunch or "hum" telling me that something is up or not quite right.

We may call it different things, and each of us may experience it a bit differently, but the common thread is this: It's an internal mechanism we have and it's quite powerful. My experience, plus the testimony of multitudes of parents I have worked with over the years, has been that when we trust these feelings, our children end up with the best possible educational

solution, and we find their joy for learning alive and well. Conversely, when we don't pay attention to it, we leave our children at risk for losing their inherent abilities and love for learning.

So, listen to and trust your intuition about your child and their education. No one knows the best learning environment, curriculum, teacher or school for your student better than you. If you are tempted to waiver, giving in to self-doubt, please contact me. I will remind you in short to trust yourself, to listen to and follow your feelings and provide you will a long list of other intuition-following parents you can call on for support. (425) 483-1353 brocksacademy.com.

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