



# WELLNEWS

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## Back to School in 6 Easy Steps

### Summer Changes

Back-to-school struggles still surprise many parents. After all, kids go back to school every year -- why don't they know what to expect? Well, consider this:

- The growth rate of kids is so fast that going back to the previous year's routine can seem pretty stale.
- Kids either dread or look forward to a new school year depending on what they remember from last year. Expectations are nearly everything.
- What's it like to go back to school? Imagine a job change for you. Your kids also may be in a new building this year, which makes it even harder to feel comfortable.

### 1. Get a Grip

Your relationship with your children has a great effect on them. So it's important not to act too crazed about the return to school. Build in extra time, put irrelevant projects on hold, stay rested, and try to stick closer to your kids. Dads need to listen up, too. Many jobs seem to pick up at this time of year, and it's easy to get sucked down by the undertow.

### 2. Case the Joint

Even if your child knows the school well, it still feels good to get reacquainted. My third-grade daughter was always crabby until she saw her classroom, thought about the schedule, met her teacher, and picked out her clothes. Your kids may enjoy getting a "sneak preview" with

another child from their school or class. Call before you go, since school buildings hours may differ per school prior to the opening day.

### 3. Don't Clean the Slate

Fresh starts are so promising that we tend to overdo them. This may seem like a great time to clean up, sort out, and set new ground rules for family life. Chores are reassigned, allowances renegotiated, and after-school sports and activities scheduled. While change is good, the timing requires some reflection. Too much too soon can make even the most cooperative child balk. Focus on the start of school, and revisit the other issues after your kids feel more settled.

### 4. Be Reassuring

Tell your kids that they'll be fine! Before school starts, encourage them to reconnect with school buddies they may not have seen over the summer. This may take some brokering, depending on the particular social appetite of your child, but it's money in the bank for reducing fears of isolation in the new classroom. If they want to, let them take part of their sticker or baseball card collection to school (with the teacher's approval). Listen to their worries and don't minimize, dismiss, or try to talk them out of them. These fears are real to your child.

### 5. Set the Stage

Shopping for supplies and clothes should be fun, but overdoing this can be boring and a little scary to kids. Spend time thinking together about

quiet time and reading and work space in the house. Choose special places, like corners of rooms, or certain tables or chairs, to show your kids that you'll help them find space where they can do the things that matter, like reading and homework.

### 6. Meet the Teacher

Your child is still young enough to feel comforted by an open communication between parent and teacher. In fact, when parents and teachers have regular discussions about school and home events, kids feel a more trusting connection with the school as a whole, and tend to try harder both socially and academically. Check-ins about new or recently lost pets, family moves, births, and deaths can help a teacher fathom something in your child that might otherwise seem mysterious. Most good schools would rather know sooner than later if you are worried about your child's school experience.



*Personalized Care*

Source: <http://www.familyeducation.com>

# Back to School lunch..It's Your Lunch You've Gotta....

## Get Involved

Help out with your lunch. Work out a menu for the week so you can choose different foods that you like and are still good for you. When your parents go to the grocery store, ask them to get the stuff you need. To keep things simple, try snack-size packs. Or, get big packages of your favorite foods, repack enough for each day in baggies, and then grab them when it's time to throw lunch together. If mornings get hectic, try packing your lunch the night before. (Just make sure you keep the cold stuff in the fridge until it's time to go.)

## Tips

Choose low-fat or non-fat foods whenever you can — like low-fat yogurt, cheese, or milk!

## Get Creative

Plain sandwich? One word: BORING. To jazz up your lunch, use different kinds of breads, like whole-grain pita pockets, tortilla wraps, raisin bread, or English muffins. Make kabobs with cut-up fruits and vegetables and bring along yogurt or salad dressing as a dip. Toss in a salad with some chicken on top.

## Use ChooseMyPlate

MyPlate illustrates the five food groups that are the building blocks for a healthy diet using a familiar image—a place setting for a meal. Before you eat, think about what goes on your plate or in your cup or bowl. To learn more about building a healthy plate, select a food group below.

Here's a lunch formula for the power and energy you need to make it through the day:

- Half a plate should be fruits and vegetables (like carrot sticks, celery, or apples)
- A container of milk or yogurt, or some cheese (switch to fat-free or low fat (1%) milk)
- Make half of your grains whole- grains some whole-grain bread for a sandwich, cereal mix, or pasta (like spaghetti)
- Some meat (like ham or chicken), tuna fish, hard-boiled eggs, beans (like a bean burrito), or nuts/trail mix
- A little bit of dessert (like pudding or graham crackers) — YUM!

It's not as tough as it sounds. A turkey and cheese wrap with lettuce and tomato, plus an apple or banana, and some milk, would cover all this. Lunch doesn't have to be hard or boring. Take charge! Pack yourself stuff that makes you love lunchtime, and gives you energy to make it through school, practice, homework—all the way until dinner!

Source: [www.cdc.org](http://www.cdc.org)



## Blueberry Maple Refrigerator Oatmeal



### Ingredients:

- ¼ cup old fashioned rolled oats, uncooked
- 1/3 cup skim milk
- ¼ cup low fat Greek yogurt
- 1 ½ tsp. dried chia seeds
- 2 tsp. maple syrup, more or less to taste
- ¼ cup fresh blueberries
- Suggestion: Can substitute ground flaxseed for chia seeds. Add less milk for thicker texture. Use any fruit or spices in oatmeal.

### Preparation:

- In half pint jar, add oats, milk, yogurt, chia seeds, and maple syrup.
- Put lid on jar and shake well until combined.
- Remove lid and add blueberries. Stir until thoroughly mixed.
- Return lid to jar and place in refrigerator for up to 2 days.
- Enjoy chilled.
- Serves 1.

### Nutritional Information

#### Per Serving:

Calories: 215, Total Fat: 4g, Carbohydrates: 48g, Protein: 12g, Fiber: 8g

Source: [www.theyummylife.com](http://www.theyummylife.com)

## Healthy Family Activities

Be sure to check out this month's healthy family activities in your community at:

<http://search.active.com/?tab=events>

