

10 tips to prepare your child for high school

Starting secondary school is exciting, but it's a big step up from primary school. Getting used to the change can be difficult for some young people and first-day jitters can be hard to overcome.

Here are some tips to help prepare your child for high school:

1. **Be positive and enthusiastic.** Your child is more likely to look forward to starting high school if you're positive about it.
2. **Attend orientation events.** Most high schools offer an open day in the second semester where grade six students and their parents can attend, meet teachers and tour the facilities.
3. **Find a school buddy for your child.** This may be a neighbor's child or an older playmate. Some high schools have their own 'buddy system', where older children at the school look out for new students.
4. **Understand the school routine.** Being familiar with timetables, scheduled breaks and start or finish times can help your child to know what to expect from their school day.
5. **Be prepared ahead of time.** Involve your child in getting their books, uniform and travel pass organized well in advance of their start date, so they feel reassured and don't have to worry.
6. **Visit the school over the Christmas holidays, if possible.** Stroll around the grounds to familiarize your child with the location of the toilets, office, lockers and sports facilities.
7. **Figure out the travel route.** Talk with your child about how they will get to and from school, and explore the route with them a few times before they start.
8. **Practice travelling to and from school.** If they're walking or catching public transport, go with your child or arrange someone else to accompany them until they are confident travelling on their own.
9. **Have an emergency safety plan.** Be clear about who your child should contact and what you expect them to do in an emergency. Be calm and matter-of-fact about issues such as crossing major roads on their own or catching public transport if you are unable to arrange a lift for them.
10. **Encourage your child to talk about their feelings.** They may be anxious about making the transition to high school or they may experience difficulties settling in once they start. Reassure them that it's normal to have mixed feelings about starting a new school.

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