

## How to Get Your Child Back Into a Routine When a New School Year Starts

Welcome to August, otherwise known as the “Sunday of summer.” Every year, this month comes barreling in, knocking at our door, and we can’t help but greet it with a mix of surprise, sadness, and yes – even some relief. With the end of long days at the pool and soaking up the sun comes the beginning of back-to-school shopping and renewed hope that this will be the year our kids finally get to school on time.

As seasoned parents know, preparing our kids to go back to school goes beyond bringing out the backpacks and checking off a list of school supplies. This year especially, with many schools projecting virtual openings, the real challenge comes when we have to replace lazy afternoons in the sun with homework help and late-night bonfires with an earlier bedtime. But the new schedule doesn’t have to be a battle.

Let them operate independently. As high school rolls around, parents should be stepping back and letting their teens take the driver’s seat. (After all, if they’re trusted to operate a vehicle, they should be trusted to operate their life!) Starting off, this can be as simple as teaching them how to use an online management system so they can organize their own activities. But you’ll also want to talk about what they’ll be responsible for – particularly when it comes to expenses. Will they have a job? Who’s paying for dinners with friends? Even if you’ve agreed to help your high schooler out, give them a lump sum budget to teach them how to manage their money and avoid continuously doling out the dollars.

Prompt them to make a plan. When your teen enters high school, you may notice they’ll start looking to the future more. Help your high schooler explore their goals. What’s their biggest worry this year? How will they stay organized? Are they looking to expand their circle of friends? No matter their aspirations – or concerns – you can help them execute their plan of attack. As they come into their own, they may have difficulty navigating their path – and they will almost certainly have a few power struggles along the way – but with your guidance, you can help them take one step closer to being the independent adult they wish to be.

Adapted from: <https://www.today.com/parenting-guides/how-get-back-school-routine-t179338>

