



Brought to you by YOUR Organization

Welcome to the Parenting Hub!

Starting Back to School on the Right Foot



*Parent Connex™ is under the Beech Acres Parenting Center umbrella of programs.
Serving children and all the adults in their lives for over 170 years.*

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It's a Fresh Start!

Summer vacation is wrapping up and most school-age children are returning to the classroom and to the school year structures and routines this month.

Help your child's transition back to school run more smoothly with a little advance preparation and intentionality!



Making the Shift... Time Management

Sleep Time

- Shift to a routine with an earlier bedtime to make sure your child(ren) get the right amount of sleep. If your child has been going to bed later for the summer, a slow shift to an earlier bedtime and earlier waking time in the a.m. can be incredibly helpful.
- The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends:

Age	Hours of Sleep
3-5 years old	10-13 hours, including naps
6-12 years old	9-12 hours
13-18 years old	8-10 hours

Transition Time

- Plan daily **transition time** for your child when they return home from daycare, preschool or school rather than jumping right into more routines related to homework, activities, etc. This will help kids reset and transition with success.
- Consider posting a schedule with pictures for younger children. Encourage older children to develop their own schedules to practice time management.



Making the Shift... Homework Expectations

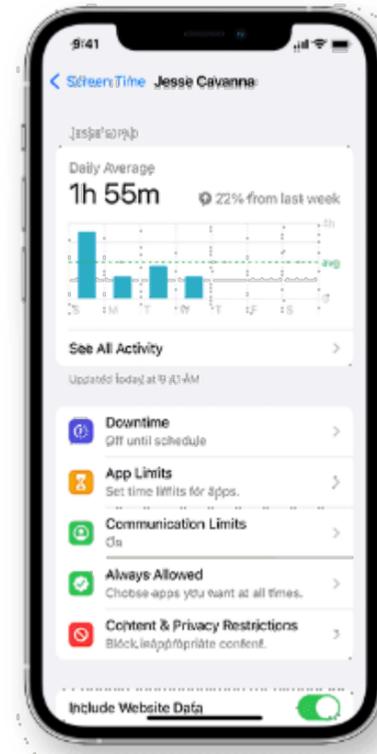
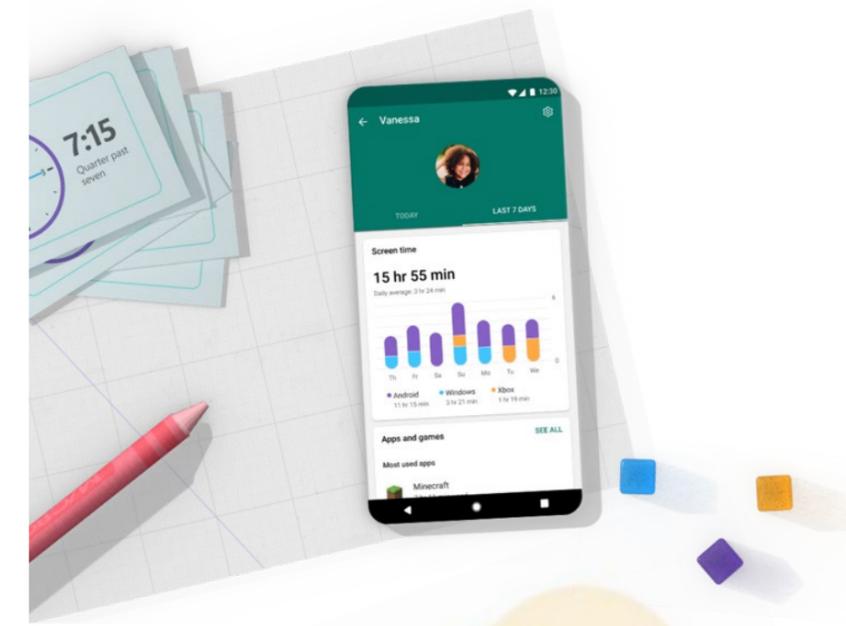
- Designate a **homework spot** where your child will do their homework. Have materials your child will need to do their homework on hand nearby.
 - For older children have a conversation with what learning environment works best for them...
 - Absolute quiet? With music? Is in front of the TV allowed?
 - If they are using a computer, will it be in a central area? Will they have permission to keep it in their room? What rules will come with that responsibility?
 - How soon after arriving home will they need to start their homework? Before or after dinner/practice?
 - Are they to complete it independently or will you review it?
 - What are the consequences if they do not keep up with their homework?
- Having a **conversation in a calm moment** prior to school starting and even writing down what has been agreed to may help with future battles.



Making the Shift... Screentime

- If screen time has been increased over the summer months, the start of the school year is a good time to **cut back on screen time**, so your child will have adequate time for homework, physical activity, family time, and sleep.
- Few suggestions...
 - In Outlook, have your child(ren) under a family account.
 - <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoft-365/family-safety>
 - Google Families helps to manage time and apps.
 - <https://families.google.com/familylink/#>
 - Apple Screentime helps you manage your own usage and create downtime for your children.
 - <https://support.apple.com/guide/iphone/set-up-parental-controls-iph00ba7d632/ios>
 - One family we supported reached a compromise... the 12-year-old could get a phone earlier than 13, but Safari was removed from it.

On the next slide you'll find a cellphone contract you can print and sign with your child.



Exclusive!
Cell Phone
Contract developed
by experienced
Parent Coaches,
only available to
organizations &
businesses who
subscribe to Parent
Connex[®].

Cell Phone Contract



Congratulations! You are now a proud owner of a phone. You have proven that you are ready for this and by accepting this device, you are also agreeing to the expectations we have set.

Please read through the following contract and sign it. As part of this contract, we will have routine discussions about your phone use to review the basic guidelines and discuss any challenges or concerns.

As technology continues to change, so may the contract. We understand this is an ongoing learning opportunity and we are here to support you as you learn.

Love,

Honor Code:

- I will never message and/or talk to someone and then delete to hide this from my parent(s)/caregiver.
- I will not disrespect or be unkind to others when using my cell phone.
- I will only install apps that are pre-approved by my parent(s).
- I will not make any purchases using my cell phone without permission from my parents.
- I am responsible to take care of my phone. If it is damaged, I know that I am responsible. My parent(s)/caregiver do not have to replace my phone if it becomes damaged or broken.
- I am responsible for any overage charges for data.
- I understand that my cell phone is a privilege and can be taken away if I am not acting responsibly or if I am not following family rules.
- I will inform my parents immediately if something threatening or alarming happens.
- I will allow my parents to monitor my cell phone by:
 - Always knowing the passwords
 - Phone Tracking App
 - Access to Texts at any time
 - Access to Apps and Content any time
- I will not use my cell phone during these agreed upon settings/times:

Phone Use:

- I will keep my cell phone turned on and charged at all times.
- I will always pick up phone calls and respond to texts from my parents or other caring adults.
- I will put my phone in an agreed upon place at ____ pm.

Expectations/Etiquette:

- I will not use my phone during meal times or family activities time.
- I will not use my phone while I am doing homework or at during class at school.
- I will not text or talk on my cell phone while driving (if applicable).
- I will not look at my cell phone when talking with someone in person.
- I will use my strength of Self-Control when asked to hand over my phone; and not ask questions or show frustration.

Consequences for not following contract:

Consider discussing varying degrees of consequences. Deleting and downloading without permission may be a greater consequence than letting your phone die or forgetting it.

I agree to all parts of this contract:

Signature _____

Date _____

Parent/Caregiver Signature _____

Parent/Caregiver Signature _____

Managing Back to School Jitters with Intentionality



All Ages

- Talk to your child about how they are feeling and make sure to **listen to what they have to say**. Offer support and normalize that everyone feels nervous at the start of a new school year.
- When possible, **tour their new classroom or school building** and **meet the teacher and other school staff** before the first day of school.
- **Schedule a play date or encouraging a few text messages to meet up with a friend** or small group of friends before the first day back to school.
- Take your child **Back to School Shopping**. Let them pick out their school supplies and encourage them to pick out a special outfit for the first day. If this poses a challenge with your family's budget, perhaps a **special snack** to pack for the first week. And a **note in their backpack or lunchbox** is simple but lets them know you are thinking about them.
- Plan a **special outing or meal** to celebrate the start of the new school year.
- If your child is especially anxious, **consider seeking additional support** through your child's school or pediatrician.

For younger children

- For younger children, plan to **spend extra time during drop-off** at the daycare or preschool the first week of the new year.

Managing Back to School Jitters with Mindfulness

You can use your hand to help you practice Self-Control and Prudence anywhere!

Breathe in as you trace up your thumb and breathe out as you trace down the other side. Do this with all of your fingers. Repeat finger tracing until you feel your emotions and body are back under control.



Give your child(ren) a few coping tools...

- For younger children, have them stand big and tall like a superhero - inside the house RIGHT before they start to walk to the bus stop. It will make them feel powerful! Scientifically proven to work!
- Teach them to trace one hand with their opposite index finger, breathing in as their finger goes up and out as it goes down. (Diagram provided.)
- Older children can subtly pinch a pressure point, the skin between their index finger and thumb, which many believe helps to alleviate stress, anxiety and even headaches.

Source: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-superheroes/201107/why-you-may-want-stand-superhero>

Managing back to school jitters with Character Strengths

Print this out and talk to them about the strengths they see in themselves, and you see in them.



Appreciation of Beauty
I value and respect the unique qualities in everything I see around me.



Bravery
I take on challenges and speak up for what is right.



Creativity
I can think of lots of ways to solve problems and use my imagination.



Curiosity
I explore the world around me with an open mind and ask questions often.



Fairness
I believe everyone should have the same opportunities.



Forgiveness
I believe that everyone deserves a second chance. I can let things go.



Friendship
I get along well with others and my friends can count on me.



Gratitude
I appreciate the good things that happen to me.



Honesty
I am open and truthful.



Hope
I feel positive when I think about the future.



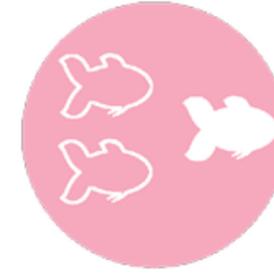
Humility
I let my accomplishments speak for themselves.



Humor
I like bringing a smile to others.



Kindness
I am helpful and nice to others.



Leadership
People value my opinion and look to me for direction.



Love
I value my close relationships with others.



Love of Learning
I get excited about discovering new things.



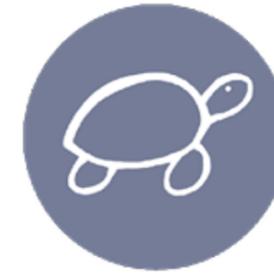
Perseverance
I work hard to achieve my goals and don't give up.



Perspective
I can see other people's points of view and offer good advice.



Judgment
I am open-minded and think through my decisions.



Prudence
I carefully and thoughtfully approach situations I encounter.



Self-Control
I can stop, wait and manage my emotions.



Sense of Meaning
I am discovering my purpose and place in the world.



Teamwork
I like being part of a team and doing my share.



Zest
I approach daily life with energy and excitement.

9 Emerging Strengths... for the little ones

Recognizing all 24 strengths, especially Judgment or Sense of Meaning, could be overwhelming for younger students. These are the ones that emerge first, so are easiest to understand:

- Teamwork
- Creativity
- Curiosity
- Love of Learning
- Perseverance
- Friendship/Social Intelligence
- Humor
- Kindness
- Love

Start with just these 9 and how they will use them in school.





_____ 's

Top 5 Strengths

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Print out this slide or create your own chart to post near your child's homework station to remind them of their strengths.

Conversation Starters

- Which strengths do they naturally bring into the classroom? Using their top 5 will bring positive energy to their day!
- Which do they want to work on in the coming year? All 24 are inside of them.
- Share your thoughts on which you tend to bring into the workplace, and those that you'd like to focus on.

Connections are Key

Decompressing after School:

- Allow time and space to “shift gears” from school to home.
- Offer a snack, some outdoor free time, or understand if your child wants alone time with peace and quiet.
- Be open to talking about your child’s day if they want to chat about it.



Don't forget about “Time in” with your child:

- Spend 1:1 time with your child.
- Plan 5 minutes per day to interact with your child with no distractions or interruptions.
- Give your child choices in the activities you all do together.



Family Time is always a good time:

- Enjoy mealtime together whenever possible.
- Take a family walk together after dinner.
- Plan family outings on the weekends to a local park, library, etc.



Families Report a Positive Change in Just 3 Sessions and it LASTS 3 Months Later

After 3 Sessions	3 Months Later... Effect is Still Felt
 Satisfaction as a Parent ✓	 Satisfaction as a Parent ✓
 Self-Confidence in their Parenting ✓	 Self-Confidence in their Parenting ✓
 Relationship with their Child ✓	 Relationship with their Child ✓
 Improved Self-Care ✓	 Improved Self-Care ✓
 Overall Score ✓	 Overall Score ✓

General Population
 Statistically Significant Changes
 Seen at 95% Confidence Interval
 and p value <0.001



Connect with us!

If you are interested in something more personal, feel free to contact Katie Helmes at khelmes@beechacres.org to set-up an individual session with a Child Development expert.