



August Newsletter

101 back-to-school tips for parents and kids

As summer comes to an end and back-to-school season begins, it can be hard to get back into the rhythm of a regular schedule — for both kids and adults. The trick, of course, is to plan ahead. Start preparing everyone a few weeks early, and make sure you have a solid child care plan in place. If you're hiring a babysitter, nanny or tutor this year, consider bringing them on a little early to help get your child on track before the first day of school.

To help you with the transition, here's a complete list of back-to-school tips for parents you can use to ease kids back into school life while also managing your own stress. Read through this list of 101 tips and identify the strategies you think could help you and your family stay organized and on top of things this school year. Then, test out different approaches as a family so you can figure out which ones work for you and which ones don't.

★ Key takeaways

- Planning ahead helps families ease into the back-to-school routine with less stress.
- Adjust schedules early, get organized, and consider extra support like tutors or sitters.
- A little preparation goes a long way toward a smooth, confident start.

♥ Mental and emotional back-to-school tips

1. Set your kids' sleep schedules back to "school time" two weeks before the first day of school.
2. Use an egg timer to get your kids used to focusing for specific periods of time.
3. Encourage your kids to read at least one (or one more) book before the school year begins.
4. Discuss what your kids can expect on the first day of school so they feel more prepared.
5. Ask teachers for class rosters so you can connect your kids with new classmates.
6. Talk openly with your kids about their feelings about returning to school and be ready to answer any questions.



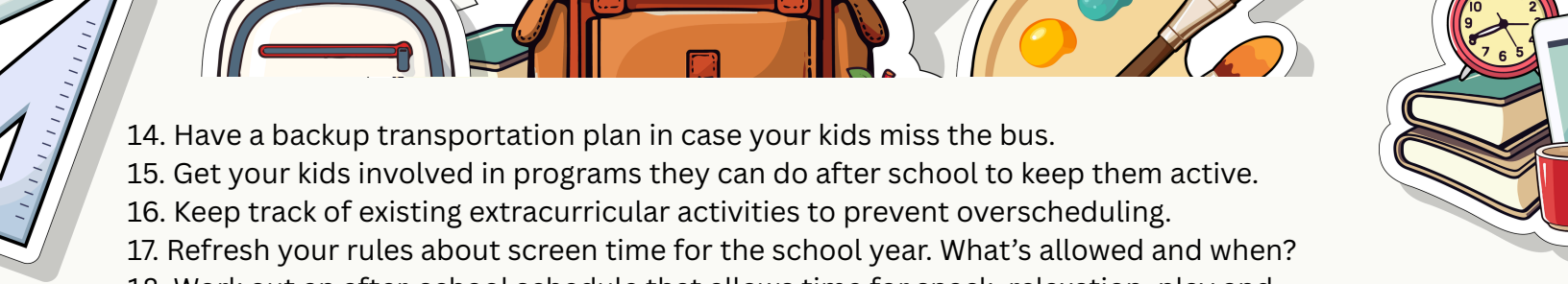
Schedule and time management back-to-school tips

7. Let kids choose a planner or scheduling tool they're excited to use.
8. Help your kids put together a rough outline of their school and activity schedules.
9. Create a family calendar or choose a calendar app that tracks everyone's activities and commitments.
10. Set up weekly meetings to review your kids' schedules for the week(s) ahead.
1. Set a time each week to sync up individual calendars with the family calendar.
12. Schedule blocks of time to check in with each child to see how things are going.



Before- and after-school tips

13. Hire a before- or after-school sitter to help care for your kids while you're at work.

- 
14. Have a backup transportation plan in case your kids miss the bus.
 15. Get your kids involved in programs they can do after school to keep them active.
 16. Keep track of existing extracurricular activities to prevent overscheduling.
 17. Refresh your rules about screen time for the school year. What's allowed and when?
 18. Work out an after-school schedule that allows time for snack, relaxation, play and study.
 19. Make a list of fun after-school activities and games to keep your kids entertained.
 20. Create a regular pet care schedule that outlines who does what for each animal and when.

Lunch prep back-to-school tips

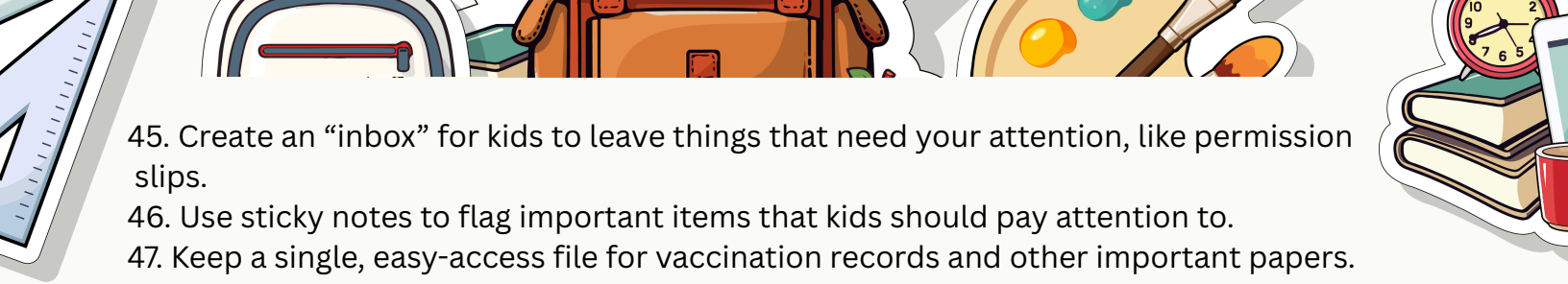
21. Buy reusable bottles to increase water consumption during the day.
22. Discuss the different pros and cons of bringing versus buying school lunches.
23. If they choose to take lunch some or all days, let your kids involved in creating and preparing their daily lunch menus.
24. Purchase lunchboxes or reusable bags to help save the environment.
25. Use this lunchbox packing list to help plan your grocery shopping in advance.
26. Buy bulk packaged snacks or bag up finger foods like grapes or carrots that can be easily added to lunches.
27. Make a week's worth of sandwiches on Sunday, wrap in tin foil and freeze. Thaw them the night before.
28. Organize lunch items in one part of the fridge for fast and easy lunch prep.
29. If they choose to buy lunch, get copies of school menus in advance to discuss lunch choices.
30. Pre-pay for school lunches online, if your school allows, or figure out a weekly allowance for buying school lunch.

Back-to-school shopping tips

31. Shop for school supplies and clothes early to avoid the rush.
32. Inventory your kids' wardrobes and toss/donate things they've outgrown.
33. Get the lists of school supplies, books and technology your kids will need.
34. Inventory last year's school supplies before going out to buy more.
35. Repurpose and relabel plastic tubs to organize all school supplies.
36. Create a list and budget for back-to-school shopping.
37. Include your kids in back-to-school shopping by letting them pick out their supplies.
38. Let your child choose their clothes, shoes and other items they'll need.
39. Replace old backpacks with ones that are sturdy, ergonomic and kid-friendly.
40. Stash a small amount of emergency cash in your kids' book bags, just in case.
41. Create a dedicated space at home for your kids to store their school supplies and technology.
42. Make a plan for organizing school supplies — and keeping them that way.

Organization back-to-school tips

43. Add some kid-friendly organization solutions, like low hooks for kids' coats and shoe baskets or cubbies to your entryway.
44. Establish rules for where kids should put lunchboxes, etc. when they come home.

- 
45. Create an “inbox” for kids to leave things that need your attention, like permission slips.
 46. Use sticky notes to flag important items that kids should pay attention to.
 47. Keep a single, easy-access file for vaccination records and other important papers.
 48. Designate a plastic tub as a put-away bin for anything out of place.
 49. Use a see-and-store toy rack to make it easier for kids to stay organized.
 50. Give everyone a shower caddy to keep bathroom supplies organized.
 51. Use under-the-bed storage for off-season clothes and toys that aren’t regularly used.
 52. Set up a hanging organizer in your child’s closet with five slots for clothes, one for each day of the week.
 53. Dedicate a rack in the garage, basement or entryway for sports equipment.
 54. Set up a laundry system that makes it easy to sort and wash clothes.

🌙 Tips for the night before

55. Encourage your kids to lay out their school clothes before going to bed.
56. Have kids pack their school bags.
57. If they bring their own lunch, have the kids pack their lunch boxes.
58. Have kids pack their gym or sports bags.
59. Make sure any bags, equipment or must-bring items are left by the door.

😴 Back-to-school sleep tips

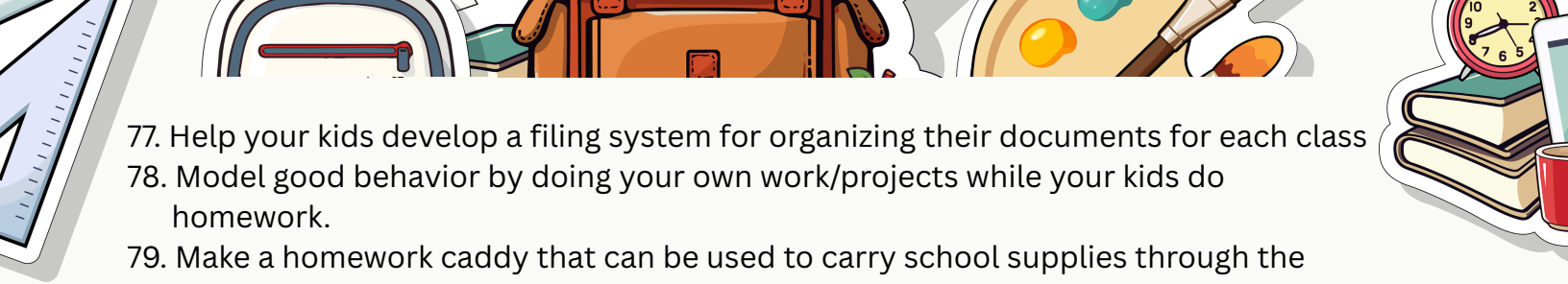
60. Set an alarm or notification 30 minutes before bedtime.
61. Establish regular bedtime routines, using these printable checklists.
62. Set — and enforce — regular weekday and weekend bedtimes.
63. Remove tech devices, such as phones and tablets, from kids’ bedrooms so the focus is on sleeping.
64. Use night lights, white sound machines and fans for kids who can’t get to sleep.

🌅 Back-to-school morning tips

65. Set your clocks forward 10 minutes. This makes it easier to be on time.
66. Make sure your kids (and you!) have an effective wakeup alarm that works for them.
67. Use this checklist to establish a regular morning routine.
68. Map out a bathroom schedule to avoid family fights for bathroom time.
69. Set — and enforce — regular weekday and weekend wakeup calls.

📖 Homework back-to-school tips

70. To help with time management, determine together how long it takes kids to do assignments.
71. Teach kids to prioritize their assignments by making to-do lists with deadlines.
72. Establish a specific space like the family office as an official “homework station.”
73. Remove distractions like TVs and video game consoles from homework areas.
74. Set a regular alarm each day that signals the start of homework time.
75. Try apps like iHomework 2 or myHomework to help your kids organize assignments.

- 
77. Help your kids develop a filing system for organizing their documents for each class
 78. Model good behavior by doing your own work/projects while your kids do homework.
 79. Make a homework caddy that can be used to carry school supplies through the house.
 80. Use positive phrasing, such as, “You can go outside after your homework is done,” rather than, “You’re not going outside until this is finished.”
 81. Schedule study blocks on the weekends before big tests, midterms and finals.

Tips for staying connected with teachers

82. Figure out ways to be involved in the classroom this school year.
83. Touch base with teachers early on to troubleshoot any issues your kids may be having. Here are questions you can ask the teacher.

Decluttering back-to-school tips

84. Go through the kids’ wardrobes every two to three months to get rid of things that no longer fit.
85. Frame a couple of your child’s best works of art and file or toss the rest (when they’re not looking, of course).
86. Go through your kids’ schoolwork once a month to toss the things you don’t want.
87. File or scan assignments you want to keep.

Tips for setting back-to-school goals

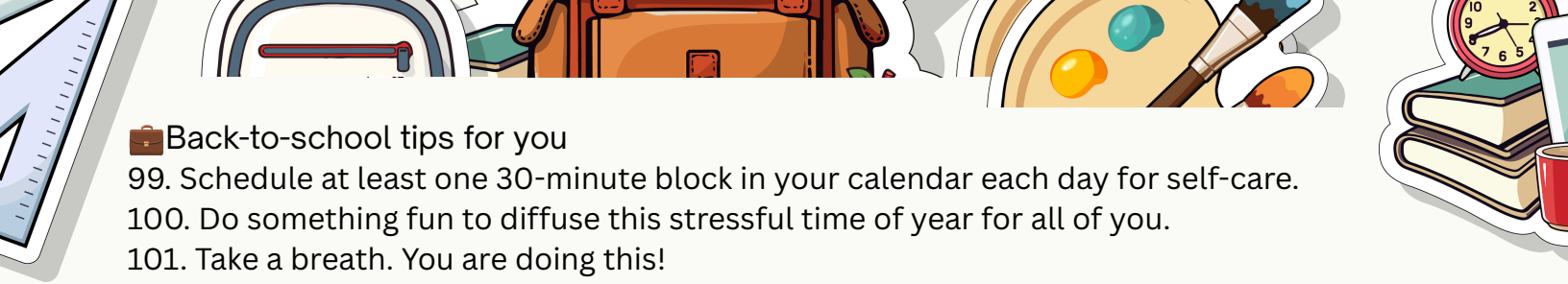
88. Have your kids set realistic goals for the new school year, such as reading 30 books or filling a journal. Tips for goal setting for kids.
89. Work out a to-do list of age-appropriate chores for each child and help them set weekly goals for completing them (without being asked).
90. Help your kids prioritize their activities by tying them to their year’s goals.
91. Create a rewards system for when kids meet goals or do extra things around the house.

Fun back-to-school tips

92. Carve out blocks of fun time for your kids, based on what they enjoy doing most.
93. Establish a set “family time,” whether it’s during dinner or before bed.
94. Give kids a specific day when they can choose all the activities you do together.

Child care back-to-school tips

95. Hire a housekeeper to help with cleaning and crossing things off your to-do lists.
96. Consider hiring a dog walker. One less thing to worry about!
97. Hire a tutor or homework helper (many even tutor virtually) to help you navigate schoolwork.
98. If you have a regular nanny or sitter who’s open to doing extra work, negotiate a price for them to take on some helpful tasks, like prepping or preparing dinner, cleaning high-traffic areas or doing grocery shopping or running errands.



 Back-to-school tips for you

- 99. Schedule at least one 30-minute block in your calendar each day for self-care.
- 100. Do something fun to diffuse this stressful time of year for all of you.
- 101. Take a breath. You are doing this!

 Scripture for the Month

And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up.
And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. -- James 5:15 ESV

In Faith & Health
Health & Wellness Ministry
Fountain of Faith Missionary Baptist Church