

TUSCALOOSA CITY SCHOOLS

Parent/Family Tips for Helping Students Transition Back to School

Anxiety, stress, and uncertainty have all been felt strongly by children of all ages. Though all children deal with such emotions in different ways, they have been faced with school closures, cancelled events or separation from friends, and are going to need to feel loved and supported now more than ever as they adjust back to school.

Be Calm and Proactive

Parents, have calm, proactive conversations with your children about the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), and the importance in keeping themselves healthy. Inform them of the symptoms and encourage them to let you know if they're not feeling well. Reassure your children that illness due to COVID-19 infection is generally mild, especially for children and young adults. Remind them that there are many effective things they can do to keep themselves and others safe and to feel in better control of their circumstances: frequently wash their hands, don't touch their faces and engage in physical distancing.

Stick To A Routine

Make sure that there is a schedule for the day of virtual. The schedule may include playtime where they can get on their phone and connect with friends, but also should have technology-free time and time set aside to help around the house. When it comes to younger children, depending on who is supervising them, structure their day so that all of the things that need to get done before anything else happens: all of their schoolwork and all of their chores. For parents who are not able to supervise their children during virtual days, explore with your caretaker ways to create a structure that works best. Make sure your child gets at least seven hours of sleep and is in bed at a reasonable set time.

Let Your Child Feel Their Emotions

With school closures come cancelled school plays, concerts, and sport activities that children are deeply disappointed about missing out on. Let them be sad. This is bigger for them than it is for us. Support and normalize that they are sad and frustrated about the losses they are mourning. Empathy and support is the way to go.

Check In With Them About What They're Hearing

There is a lot of misinformation circulating about the coronavirus disease (COVID-19). Find out what your child is hearing or what they think is true. If you don't find out what they are thinking and directly address the misunderstanding, they may combine the new information you give them with the old information they have.

Create Welcome Distractions

When it comes to processing different emotions, allow distractions when kids need relief from feeling overwhelmed. Consider family game nights, or cook meals together. With teens and their screens, allow for some leeway, but not a free-for-all.

