



# RETURNING TO SCHOOL

Information for parents of Primary and Post-primary Students

## ROUTINES

Routines help children feel secure.

Plan the routine that you would like to see in place for school time.

Chat with you child about the plan and include their views.

Think about routines for sleep, screen time and meal times.

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### SLEEP ROUTINE

- As soon as possible start to move your child's bedtime a little earlier each night and wake them a little earlier each morning.
- Create a relaxing age appropriate wind-down routine for the hour before lights off. Wind down activities include taking a bath or shower, reading a book (alone or together), drawing or colouring, listening to music, meditation or going for a walk.
- Start using the wind down routine as soon as possible.



### SCREEN TIME ROUTINE

- Work towards no screen time an hour before sleep to improve sleep quality.
- Where possible have no screens in bedrooms.



### MEAL TIME ROUTINE

- Start adjusting mealtimes to match up with school time routines as soon as possible.
- Talk to your child about the importance of eating well and involve them in planning, shopping and preparation.

### MAINTAINING ROUTINES

It is very easy to let routines drift once your child is back at school. Think about school morning, evening and homework routines.



### MORNING ROUTINE

- Encourage your child to get everything ready the evening before.
- Help your child understand the time management is needed to:-
  - Get up and get ready.
  - Have breakfast.
  - Be on time for their lift, bus or walk to school.



### EVENING ROUTINE

- Change out of their uniforms as soon as they get home.
- Have a snack and a chat.
- Have some time outside.
- Get everything ready for the morning.



### HOMEWORK ROUTINE

- Choose a suitable space, free from distractions like TV.
- Sooner started, sooner finished and the more free time to do other things.



## HAVING THE CHATS

- Make time to talk with your child about what they think and feel about going back to school, their hopes, fears and worries.
- Acknowledge that school is going to be different. Explain why it is going to be different.
- Be calm as this will reassure your child.
- Remember - it's ok to not have all the answers.



## MANAGING YOUR CHILD'S ANXIETY

- Your child may be anxious about returning to the classroom. Listen to your child. Hear what their concerns are. Acknowledge their feelings and let them know that you know and understand it is tough for them.
- Recognise and tell your child about the things you admire about them.
- Encourage your child to connect with friends before they return to the classroom.



## PARENT SELF-CARE

- Remember, you need to look after yourself to look after your child. Take the time to check in with your own feelings.
- Be kind to yourself. Acknowledge all the good work you're doing and praise yourself.
- Talk to your partner, family and friends. Let them know when you need some help.
- Every family is different so try not to compare yourself to others.
- Take a break and make time to do something you enjoy.

Go to [www.loveparenting.ie](http://www.loveparenting.ie)  
for more information on these tips and for a full list of  
parent and family support services available in Limerick.