



Routines

When routines are in place children feel more secure. Adjusting your summer routine will help children understand that the summer is coming to an end and prepare them for the return of school.

Have plan in your own head about what you would like to see happen. Set a time to have the conversation about routines with your child. Get their views and agree a plan together. Check they understand, and put the plan into place gradually. Talk to your child to see if the plan is working and make changes if they are needed.

Below is some guidance to help you develop sleep, screen time and meal time routines.

Sleep Routines

- Adjust bedtimes gradually. Two weeks before the first day of school, start to move your child's bedtime earlier at night. Wake them a small bit earlier each morning. Continue this process every night until your child is waking at the same time that will be necessary once school starts.
- Create a relaxing wind-down routine. For about an hour before you want the lights turned off for the night encourage calming activities. For younger children this might be taking a bath, reading a book together, drawing or colouring. For older children this could be listening to music, taking a shower, meditation or going for a walk.
- Repeating this pre-sleep routine every night in the weeks leading up to the first day of classes will help your child learn to anticipate sleep time, making it easier for everyone once school starts again.

Screen time routines

- Less screen time before bed can help your child improve the quality of their sleep.
- Try to ensure there is no screen time an hour before your child goes to sleep. Where possible there should be no screens in their bedroom.

Meal times routines

- Try to gradually adjust mealtime in August to match up with school time routines.
 - Talk to your child about the importance of eating well. Encourage your child to think of food as fuel for their body and involve them in decisions about what they eat. Involve them in the weekly shop, meal planning and preparation.
-



We know there are loads of online resources to help you support your child as they start back in school. The problem is finding the time to search for them! To help you, we have collected as many of the high quality resources that would could find and put them in one place – you can find them [here](#).



If you think you need additional help in supporting your child return to school, you can find a full list of Limerick-based parenting and family support organisations by clicking [here](#).