

# Education News & Notes

## Ready For Learning: Back To School Survival Tips

(NAPSA)—As a new school year approaches, many parents ask themselves if they have adequately prepared their children for the learning adventures ahead. Meanwhile, families want to be able to enjoy the time they have left together before the kids hustle off to the classroom.

Here are some back-to-school survival tips that will enable you and your children to make a smooth transition to the new school year:

1. Bedtime regime—Parenting experts agree consistency is a fundamental key in a child's routine. Prepare them several weeks before the school year begins by establishing a set bedtime. Ten to twelve hours of sleep is a good guideline for a well-rested child.

2. Time on your side technology—Take advantage of the ease and convenience of Internet shopping. With the ease of technology, gearing up with school clothes and supplies is just a click away. One well-known educator resource and school supply site is [www.smarterkids.com](http://www.smarterkids.com), which offers great deals through its clearance section.

3. Reading is rudimentary—Make it a family event by incorporating reading or storytelling during evening meals. Preschoolers can present drawings or paintings; older children can incorporate poems or lyrics with their daily events. Many public libraries promote summer reading incentive programs.

4. Physical activity—Get the blood pumping and encourage gross motor skill development and family time by taking early morning or evening walks, riding bikes or skating. Outdoor games can include baseball, basketball, football, soccer, tennis, street hockey, volleyball, golf, Frisbee or tetherball. Create your own obstacle course by including hoops, cones, ropes, buckets and balls.

The screenshot shows the SmarterKids Education Center website. The main article is titled "Essential Back-to-School Tips" and is a checklist for parents designed to help ease back-to-school anxiety. The article text includes: "The short summer months will begin to wind down soon and school buses take the place of car rides to the beach. It's time for children to head back to school. Just as the fall approaches so does back-to-school anxiety, which can affect the entire family. Between kids fearing they'll miss the bus and won't make new friends and parents feeling stressed about hectic mornings and caprooling chaos, how can anyone get excited about the first day back to school?" and "The beginning of the school year brings many worries for children that can lead to sleepless nights and stomachaches. Forgetting one's lunch or not being able to find the bathroom in time can be quite traumatic for children," said SmarterKids.com's Director of Education Susan Graham. Parents can set the tone for a successful transition from summer to the new classroom by proactively addressing their children's concerns. Below are nine tips to help ease your child's back-to-school anxiety.

**By providing stimulating learning experiences, parents can help prepare their children for the school year ahead.**

5. Learning with language—Take the opportunity on road trips to practice letter recognition by playing well-known games of alphabet license plate or billboard games. An award-winning Web site that offers quality development products perfect for travel can be found at [www.smarterkids.com](http://www.smarterkids.com).

6. Motivating with math—Take advantage of such activities as gardening and getaways to graph, count and measure. Routine outings such as grocery shopping abound with math opportunities. Allow younger children to count the number of fruits and vegetables put into the cart. Older children can offer their skills to calculate a running total of the items in the cart, teaching them the valuable skills of addition and finance.

7. Sensory science—Provide stimulating science explorations with "magic bottles" made with recycled water or soda bottles and filled with corn syrup (or oil and water). Allow children to add in shells, plastic beads or glitter and food coloring or liquid watercolor for a special touch. Make magnificent bubbles with alternative objects such as fly swatters and coffee cans.