[IMAGE]

4 Tips for a Smooth School Year

By Editorial Staff

Depending on your local school district, your children have already returned to school or on the verge of doing so. *Where did the summer months go*? Just when you'd started to relax and unwind, the calendar seemingly flipped forward two months and here you are, back to the proverbial grind. But don't fret: here's how students (and parents) can make a smooth transition from the lazy days of summer to the manic school year.

1. *Schedule a Vacation*: We'll start with this one because the absolute best way to get through any challenge is by visualizing the reward that's on the other side. Don't wait until Christmas or Spring Break to get away; plan a weekend vacation or two during the school year, put the dates on your calendar, and remind the entire family constantly that they're there. On the busiest day, craziest week and every moment in between, your upcoming vacation is the sunshine that will break through even the cloudiest sky.

2. *Get Organized*: Adults need it as much as children, and it's essential during the school year: *organization*. Without it, no one will survive, pure and simple. Your keys to organization in the Digital Age include calendar reminders on everyone's phones, scheduling for anything and everything including study time (without said phones), and a Sunday night discussion about the upcoming week and how the entire family can accomplish everything that's required. But don't turn your life into a schedule; go off the grid when you can with an impromptu trip to get ice cream or a bike ride around the neighborhood.

back to school - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark 3. *Hit the Pillow*: If your children are young, you could be up late on any given night (or up early on any given morning) if they're fussy sleepers, are still going through the bed-wetting phase, or (as many parents can attest) just *don't seem to want to stay asleep all night*. For older kids, the reasons are different, but the result is often the same: late-night studying, early classes (but before they're old enough to drive themselves to school) and so much more can make for long nights and too little sleep for them – and you.

You can't necessarily do anything about the above, but you can teach proper sleep habits, whether it's shutting down electronics an hour before bed, ensuring rooms are dark / quiet enough for appropriate

slumber, and changing curfew (or even saying no) for a particular night / event when you know your child hasn't been sleeping well. But don't be a hypocrite: these suggestions also apply to you as a parent.

4. *Lead by Example*: Children experience considerable amounts of stress, particularly with social media consuming so much of their time, but they don't always show it overtly – and generally aren't willing to share it with their parents. But just like you, it can affect their physical and mental health profoundly. As a parent, we're certain your No. 1 goal is to keep your kids healthy, and that includes their emotional health. If stress is overwhelming you during the school year, just imagine what it's doing to them.

Showing them how to deal with stress in a positive fashion (even if sometimes that just means recognizing / admitting you're stressed) can go a long way toward reducing their stress levels and yours. And isn't the low-stress home what everyone wants this school year – and all year round? Talk to your doctor for more tips on making this your family's best school year ever.

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