

[IMAGE]

## Surviving Back to School

By Editorial Staff

School is back for another year – and so is school-related stress for millions of parents. In fact, even if you don't have a child, you'll feel the effects of school stress – either because your friends with kids are experiencing it, or because you now have to share the road with stressed-out parents rushing their children to school, rushing to pick them up, rushing to get errands done in between, etc. With that said, this is your four-step template for surviving back to school this year:

*1. Practice Patience:* Patience is a virtue 365 days a year, but no more so when stress is high. Every moment you can be patient instead of stressed out is a victory for your health ... and the health of the people who are the recipients of your patience vs. stress.

*2. Make a Priority List:* Again, this is year-round advice, but the school year makes prioritizing priorities absolutely critical. The age-old To-Do List is timeless for a reason: It works! Every evening, make a To-Do List from most to least important for the following day. Cross off items as they're accomplished and feel the satisfaction from doing so.

*3. Think Big Picture:* No single moment can stress you out too much if you think Big Picture. Think beyond the moment. For example, if one of your children is stressing you out because they're not ready for school one morning, put it in perspective and teach, don't react to the moment. Your children may be just as prone to stress as you during the school year – but understand how to deal with it even less. Lead by example.

*4. Don't Sweat the Small Stuff:* The worst kind of stress is stress that builds over time via multiple stressful events or moments. A single stressful event is easier to deal with because it's easier to identify. Stress that builds has multiple source points, which makes it harder to process. If you don't sweat the small stuff (those small daily stressors), you can stay relatively stress-free throughout the day.

Surviving back to school is a valuable lesson for parents, kids of all ages, and even people who don't have kids (or school-aged kids). It's a lesson in stress management and stress avoidance that can improve everyone's health and wellness.

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