

Don't stress it!



Helping students manage back-to-school anxiety

Back-to-school can be a stressful time for many students due to social minefields, new rules and increasing homework demands. Stress is hard on the immune system, so it's important to help kids manage anxiety. Here are tips to keep stress at bay as the new school year begins:

- **Take a tour** — For students going to a new school, take a tour to find a classroom and learn where things are.
- **Have fun in the sun** — Sunlight provides much-needed vitamin D and is a guaranteed mood lifter. Make sure to protect against sunburn.
- **Crank up the tunes** — Listening to music is a proven way to lower blood pressure and anxiety.
- **Do yoga** — Yoga helps to foster relaxation.
- **Take a hike or drive** — Kids are more likely to open up when they're doing something and voicing concerns helps them feel better.
- **Just breathe** — Taking slow, deep breaths lessens anxiety. Have grade-schoolers visualize slowly blowing out candles on a birthday cake.
- **Additional support** — Contact a school counselor, social worker or nurse if a child still has some anxieties.

School shouldn't be a pain!

Follow these backpack safety tips

Backpacks come in all shapes and sizes — but choosing the wrong pack can spell big problems for students. Remember these tips to keep your student happy and pain-free this school year:



- Select a lightweight backpack with two wide shoulder straps
- Use a waist belt and multiple compartments to distribute weight
- Tighten straps to keep weight above the small of the back
- Don't carry backpacks over one shoulder
- Padded backs increase comfort and protect against sharp objects

Backpack weight matters. Physicians recommend that kids carry no more than 10 to 15 percent of their body weight in backpacks. Follow these child-to-pack weight ratios:

- 50 lbs, carry under 7.5 lbs
- 80 lbs, carry under 12 lbs
- 100 lbs, carry under 15 lbs
- 130 lbs, carry under 19.5 lbs
- 150 lbs, carry under 22.5 lbs