



4-H School-Age Child Care
University of California Cooperative Extension

PARENT STYLES II

Tips for Busy Parents

SCHOOL DAYS ... OFF TO A GOOD START

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The opening of school means a lot of excitement, anticipation and perhaps some fear on your children's part. As parents, we can do a lot to help our children have a successful school year.

Here are some ideas:

- ★ **Make school a priority.** Be sure your children go to school every day. Get them there on time. This tells them that school is very important.
- ★ **Visit your children's classrooms; meet their teachers, early in the year.** Tell them about your children's interests. Alert the teachers to any special needs your children might have.
- ★ **Get involved with school activities.** Volunteer to help on parents' night, or with some other event. This will show your children that you think school is valuable.
- ★ **Keep a positive attitude about school.** Children who hear negative comments adopt negative beliefs. **Smile.** Talk about happy events and nourishing ideas.
- ★ **Make sure children eat right and get enough sleep.** Good nutrition helps keep children healthy and alert. Don't neglect breakfast! Stick to bedtimes.
- ★ **Develop family esteem.** Show appreciation for children's efforts. Ask about their school day. Really listen to what they say.
- ★ **Set goals together.** These could be: finding a well-lighted place to do homework; a special time to help with homework or to read aloud to them.
- ★ **Realize learning is hard work.** Doing well in school takes sweat, nerve and endurance. It's often frustrating. So when your children get tired and cranky, be patient. Your understanding will pay big dividends in the long-run.

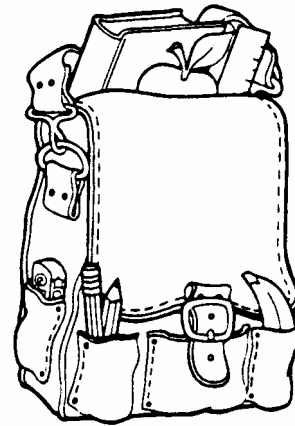


BACK TO SCHOOL

Make a special event for the first day of school. Try the following idea, or create a tradition of your own.

WHAT YOU NEED:

- ★ School supplies, gift wrapped (pencils, notebooks, art supplies)
- ★ Camera and film



WHAT TO DO:

- ★ Plan a special "*Celebrate School*" supper. Decide on the menu and go grocery shopping together. Give each child a chance to help prepare for the meal (cooking, setting the table, etc.) Use a colorful tablecloth, napkins, candles, streamers, etc., to make the event festive.

- ★ Ask each child to wear one new clothing item planned for the school year. (It could be a 'left-over' item from an older brother or sister, and not necessarily newly purchased). Take pictures. Talk about what they expect from the new school year, their hopes, dreams and concerns. Let them know you'll be there for them. Enjoy each other!

After the meal, surprise the kids with a gift from the "*back pack grab bag*".

Adapted from: University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension, "*Family Times*" Program.