

Top tips for coming back to school:

Back to School Tip #1: Keep Connected- *Relationships matter*

Your Child: Support your child to contact a friend from school, chat online or spend some time together before the start of term. For children who may find this difficult, help plan an activity or discuss ideas of what they could talk about.

Think of ways your child can feel connected to you when they return to school, E.g. give them a picture, a written message or a familiar object that they can take with them in their pocket or bag. Schools will give advice on what your child can bring with them initially.

You: Arrange to meet or call a friend or another parent, have a chat and share your plans for returning to school. Suggest walking to school together or arrange to meet up after school starts.

Together: Share anything important that has happened during lockdown with school at the start of term- let them know about any family changes, positive achievements or challenges experienced. Your child may want to draw a picture or take a photo of something positive they have done to share with a staff member or their friends.

Back to School Tip #2: Be Kind to Others- *Everyone needs Kindness*

Your Child: Encourage your child to think of ways they can be kind to others and pay attention and praise your child when you notice them doing this. "It was kind of you to... share with your friend/ include them in your group at break"

Children learn by watching others- show or tell your child ways you have been kind to others. For example, "I had a chat with our neighbour, she looked a bit sad."

You: Notice other parents on their own in and around the school, you never know who may welcome a friendly greeting or chat.

Above all, be kind to yourself. We've all been through exceptional circumstances.

If you have a child who is starting or returning to school this term you can find lots of helpful tips to help get prepared in the Building Resilience- Back to School Tips booklet.

You can download this now from www.edinburgh.gov.uk/backtoschool

[#buildingresilience](https://twitter.com/buildingresilience) #BackToSchoolEdin

Back to School Tip #3: Talk Things Over- *It's good to talk...and listen*

Your child: Notice when is a good time and make space for your child to talk about things. This may be walking the dog, in the car or at bedtime. Create opportunities for your child to build a relationship with another family member, trusted adult or professional. Be available to actively listen to what your child is thinking or how they are feeling. Name what you think they are feeling, let them know you understand and try not to jump in too

soon with a solution. For example. "It sounds like you're worried about having no one to play with, I can see why that's upsetting you."

After the school day, your child may need time to wind down before telling you about their day. You could try sharing something about your day first.

You: Think about who you can talk to about any concerns or worries you have, such as a friend, family member or maybe a professional.

Back to School Tip #4: Look on the Bright Side - *Find positive moments, however small, each day*

Our brains are wired to notice threats, sometimes that stops us seeing the good stuff. That can mean we have to really **try** to be positive.

Your child: Help your child identify the positive things about lockdown easing or returning to school. Who might they be looking forward to seeing or what might they be looking forward to doing?

You: Consider the positives for you of lockdown easing and children returning to school.

Together: It can be helpful to make time each day to think of one or two positive things. It may be nice to write these down in diary or post them in a jar, share them with your child and listen to their ideas. You could have a phrase like "Today I loved.... playing football with you"

Back to School Tip #5: Challenge Your Mindset – *Remember we can cope- we just did*

Your Child: It can be unsettling not knowing what may happen. Help your child focus on all the things they do know, such as how to get to school, what they will wear, seeing a friend. Introduce new information gradually as it becomes available.

Everyone is a unique individual, discuss with your child the little things that they **can** do or have already achieved. Remind them of these skills and successes when embarking on a new challenge.

You: It is normal that many children and parents will be feeling anxious, try to focus on how you will manage rather than what might go wrong. Show confidence, even if you are feeling a bit wobbly, it helps that your child sees that you have a plan to carry out together.

Keep an eye on the school facebook and twitter pages for more back to school tips for the rest of this week!