

Extension Education  
Tasha Killian News Column  
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## Eliminating New School Year Stress

By Tasha Killian

With the start of a new school year comes a lot of transitions. From families sending multiple children back to school, to families sending their children to school for the first time, August becomes a time of excitement and enjoyment as the new year begins. With all this excitement and enjoyment, there can also be a lot of stress and anxiety. Here's some tips for parents to make sure the transition into the new school year is a healthy and happy one!

Get to know your child(ren)'s teacher(s). You've heard the quote "It takes a village to raise a child." Part of that village includes the teachers your children interact with during their school time. Building a relationship with their teachers will also help your children to be able to feel more comfortable in the classroom. Whether you go to the Back to School nights hosted by the schools, send an email to the teacher introducing yourself, or give them a call and chat about their plans & yours for the school year, it is always a good idea to become familiar with the teachers your children will be seeing five days of the week.

Get organized. Set aside locations for where schools supplies will be kept and homework will be done. For younger children, this can be something like assigning a "backpack spot" where they are responsible for placing their backpacks. For older children it can be keeping a desk fully supplied where they are able to sit down each day and work on their homework. Whatever this means for your family, it is important to get ready for the next school day and keep routines regular so that children will know what is expected and have a place to do it. Organization can minimize struggles and encourage a smooth transition back into the school routine.

Ease into routines. Try to remember that routines take time to establish. Your children might not be able to wake up as early or as easily as they used to last year after having different bed times for the summer. It may take you a little bit longer to get everything ready the first few weeks of school. This is all normal. As you and your family are both transitioning into new schedules, remember that it is important to take time to establish routines, but also important to take it easy on yourself and ease into the new schedules.

Keep your safety in mind. It doesn't matter if your children drive, take the bus, walk, or ride a bike to school, it is important to be safe and to teach them safe principles. Make sure they wait for the bus in the designated areas and do not step into the street before the bus arrives. Teach your children to obey all traffic laws and, if they are carpooling with friends, to encourage their friends to do the same. Helping your children learn about safety is important to ensure the safety of everyone in the community.

Set technology limits with your children. With the advancement of technology in the classroom comes challenges for parents in how to set limits and discuss media usage with their children. Learning how to set limits, talk about media, and create a routine for technology during the school year is very important. USU Extension can help with this. In September we will be hosting a 4-week course titled "Tech Talks" discussing everything you need to know about parenting in a technology-filled world! Visit our website at [extension.usu.edu/juab/](http://extension.usu.edu/juab/) for more information.

Stay calm and positive. With all new things come all new fears. Whether it is a teenager starting their first day of high school and being nervous about the experience, or a third grader being in a class that is different from their best friend, starting a new school year can be a stressful time. Even if you have worries about how the school year will go, your children will look to you to be the example and to help keep them calm. By remaining positive about the experiences they have and helping them understand that you are excited for them and that it will be okay, you can help your children have a good experience starting the year.

Starting a new school year comes with a lot of transitions. Transitions can often equal stress for you as a parent as well as for your children. By following some of these tips you can eliminate some of the stress and make this the best school year yet!