

Getting Ready for School!



End of Summer Hangouts!

So many priorities compete for my family's attention: school supply purchases, new bedtime routines and school clothes shopping. All are important, but there is one end-of-summer routine we are more purposeful about. We make a list of close friends and family. Then, we plan get-togethers with them before school is back in session.

From visiting grandparents and cousins to spending time with friends and neighbors, our get-togethers vary from a meal to a game night to a day at a nearby river. Doing this alerts our kids that we are saying goodbye to summer.

– Chelsea Strom

Commission Each Student

The week before school begins, my husband and I say a commissioning prayer over our three children. We remind them that God has called them to be missionaries in their school. In this way, by being good examples of love, compassion and attentiveness to their teachers and classmates. On the way to school, I pray for them to be good ambassadors of Christ on their mission field.

–Beth Meverden





Anticipate the Coming Year

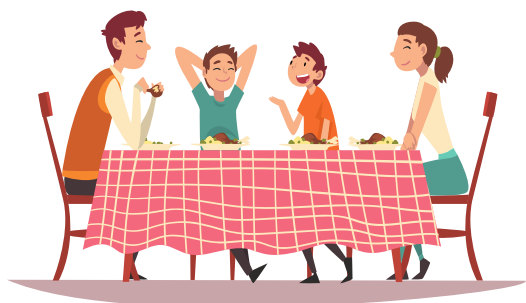
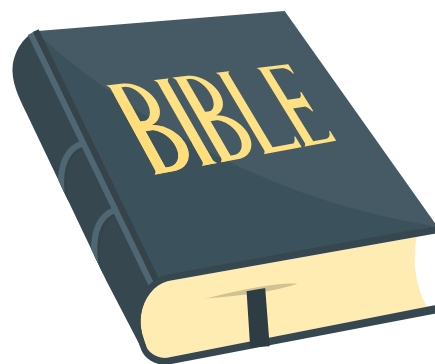
My kids were home-schooled, and most of our curriculum was ordered online. I made a point of allowing each child a few choices in the selection process. Then we made a big production of “unwrapping” the new materials at summer’s end. It was a fun way to start into the school year.

– Cecilia Lynne

Help Kids Rely on God’s Word

Before my son, Barry, started seventh grade, we asked him to choose one verse that he could read every night before bed and another verse to read every morning before school. For his shyness, he chose to read Isaiah 41:13 in the morning. “For I, the LORD your God, hold your right hand; it is I who say to you, ‘Fear not, I am the one who helps you.’” For his worry and doubt, he chose James 4:7 as his evening verse: “Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”

– Julie Dibble



Devotions with Breakfast

When I realized my children needed help with the discipline of daily devotions, I made room for it in our morning routine.

While my middle schoolers ate breakfast, I read the day’s Bible passage and message, and we discussed it. Once they headed off to school, I did the same for my elementary school daughter but with a different, more age-appropriate devotional.

– Kim Leane

For four years, my youngest had watched his older siblings make paper loop chains to count down to the first day of school. Each night at bedtime, they got to tear off one loop. When my youngest was ready for kindergarten, he wanted to start counting down before the other two kids even got out of school the previous spring. I think the chain that year had more than 100 loops on it.

Then slowly, night by night, he made it to zero loops the evening before his first day of kindergarten.

– Erin Harris

Paper Chain Countdown



Downtime Before Bedtime



The one thing that helped my children transition to an earlier bedtime for the school year was creating more downtime in the evening. This included encouraging the boys to prepare for the next day, such as choosing an outfit and talking about a school-related activity they were looking forward to. By doing a few of these little things, we found that the boys were not only physically ready to sleep but also excited to go to bed with a clear idea of what tomorrow would bring.

– Courtney Roberts

When our oldest daughter started kindergarten, we had to figure out the best way to get our little sleepyhead to wake up. After many frustrating mornings, we set our alarm for a half-hour before we had to start getting ready. When it rang, my husband would carry her from her bed into ours. We'd spend that half-hour snuggling while talking quietly or reading together. Then we all got up together. As her younger siblings have reached school age, they've joined the tradition.

– Beth Alsmeyer



Find a Wake-up Routine

Back to School With Purpose

Moving from a summer schedule to a school-year routine is a time of transition for families. To help children make this change for back to school 2022, parents can meet with their children's teachers, take a tour of the school, set earlier bedtimes the week before and practice the morning routine days before school starts. Also, here are four ways I've helped my child ease into the new school-year schedule:

Picture calendar. My son and I create a picture calendar that helps him visually understand when he will go to school and when he will stay home. A different picture is pasted on home days than on school days. The vagueness of going to school sometimes is replaced by a concrete way to understand his schedule.

Mini-missions. As my child goes off to school, I send him with a "mission." For example, I might ask him to tell a friend one kind thing today. ("You are my friend." "Thank you for playing with me at recess.") or invite someone who doesn't have many friends to sit with him at lunch. These mini-missions help teach my child to focus on and encourage others.

Goodbye ritual. When I drop my son off at school, I want to give him a focused perspective about who God calls him to be. So I have taught him that integrity means doing what is right, even when no one is watching. I ask, "How will you return to me?" when I drop him off. He responds, "With integrity, Mom!" Our goodbye ritual is the same every day. By emphasizing this character quality each day, I'm helping my son connect who he is at school with who he is at home.

