

BACK *to* SCHOOL

FAMILY ACTIVITY GUIDE



EVERY FALL,

families transition from summer break to back-to-school routines. They move from making s'mores to packing lunches. We shift our mindsets and make room for new schools, jobs, and schedules. Fall is a time when we say goodbye to the old and move into something new.

Help your family find purpose as you head back to school this fall with our Great Back to School Family Guide.



7 IMPORTANT TIPS WHEN TRANSITIONING BACK TO SCHOOL

1

CELEBRATE THE END OF SUMMER

Sometimes it's hard to leave the fun of summer. As a family, plan some time to celebrate summer. Talk about your favorite memories and activities. As you look back, begin chatting about all the things you're looking forward to in the upcoming year.

2

GO TO BED EARLIER

Kids tend to go to bed and wake up later during the summer. This can make for a rough transition during the first week or so of school as they suddenly have to wake up early. Begin the habit of going to bed earlier at least one week before the start of school. Everyone will be a little less cranky during the first few weeks of school if they are well-rested.

3

HAVE PATIENCE

Whether you like it or not, the new school year will create new habits for your family. It'll take time to figure out how to navigate your new schedule. Mentally prepare for this transitional time. Give yourself and everyone in your family grace. Be prepared with quick meals and the phone number of your favorite pizza place.

4

PLAN WITH PURPOSE

Before your year begins, make a plan for your family priorities. School activities, sports, and community events can quickly consume all of your time. Before you say yes to anything, pause and make sure you're saying yes to the right things. Remember, it's ok to say no.

5

CELEBRATE THE GOOD

As the school year begins, take time to celebrate as a family. Celebrate the start of new things. Encourage your children as they settle into new classrooms, learn new schedules, and begin to make new friends. Ice cream is always a good friend for celebrations.

6

PRIORITIZE YOUR FAITH

When your schedule gets busy, it's easy for time devoted to your faith to fall away. When we put God first in our life, all of our other priorities begin to fall into place appropriately. As you prepare for fall, make sure to prioritize your faith and church.

7

PRACTICE EATING AS A FAMILY

Eating together as a family is an important practice as you begin the school year. It's a great way to pause and connect with each other. It's ok if your meal is made up of chicken nuggets or cereal. It's not about what you eat, it's about prioritizing consistent time together as a family.



FUN FIRST WEEK OF SCHOOL TRADITIONS

Fun family traditions are a great way to make the start of school special. Consider trying some (or all) of the following first week of school traditions.



DONATE EXTRA SCHOOL SUPPLIES

When shopping for school supplies, consider buying extra and donating them to your school. Before you go shopping, ask your kids for help in picking out the extra items to donate.



SPECIAL BREAKFAST

Celebrate the first day of school with a special breakfast. This can be anything you know your kids will love- from pancakes to doughnuts, to that one sugary cereal they're always begging you to buy.



RECORD A VIDEO

Each year, record a short video of your kids' first day of school. Keep it around a minute, asking them their age and what they're looking forward to in school this year.



TAKE A FIRST (AND LAST) DAY OF SCHOOL PHOTO

Make a sign that says "First Day of 'X' Grade" and take their picture. Nothing captures how much children grow each year more than a first and last day of school photo.



SPECIAL PACKED LUNCH

In the first week of school, add something special to your kids' lunches. It could be notes of encouragement, extra snacks, a random toy, or anything that would add some excitement to their day.

FAMILY FALL GOALS

As a family, think through and discuss the goals you'd like to set for the fall. Check-in on your goals at the end of your first month of school.

SPIRITUAL GOALS:

HOUSEHOLD GOALS:

SCHOOL GOALS:

RELATIONSHIP GOALS:

HEALTH GOALS:

FINANCIAL GOALS:

SPORTS/HOBBY GOALS:

OTHER GOALS:

QUICK AND EASY MEAL IDEAS

SCAN THE QR CODE WITH YOUR PHONE CAMERA AND CHECK OUT THESE GREAT QUICK & EASY RECIPES FOR BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHTS.



SCAN ME

INSTANT POT
TURKEY &
SWEET POTATO
CHILI



SCAN ME

TASTE OF HOME
EASY CHICKEN
STRIPS



SCAN ME

HOMEMADE
HAMBURGER
HELPER



SCAN ME

SHEET PAN
SALMON &
ASPARAGUS



SCAN ME

CHEESEBURGER
CUPS



SCAN ME

INSTANT POT
CHICKEN & RICE



SCAN ME

TASTE CHICKEN
STIR FRY



SCAN ME

EASY BUTTER
CHICKEN



SCAN ME

PASTA BAKE
WITH SAUSAGE



SCAN ME

INSTANT POT
MAC & CHEESE



5 MINUTE PRAYER CHATS

EACH NIGHT AS YOUR KIDS HEAD TO BED, CHOOSE A TOPIC ON THIS PAGE TO PRAY ABOUT. CONSIDER MEMORIZING THE BIBLE VERSES ON THIS PAGE TOGETHER.

FRIENDS

PRAYER: Dear God, help me to choose good friends this year at school.

QUESTION: What makes a good friend?

“Good people are careful about choosing their friends, but evil people always choose the wrong ones.”

Proverbs 12:26

COUNTRY

PRAYER: Please help our president and leaders make good choices.

QUESTION: What would be the hardest part of being president or another elected leader?

“You should pray for rulers and for all who have authority.”

1 Timothy 2:2

OURSELVES

PRAYER: Thank you for the way you made me because.....

QUESTION: What’s something you do well?

“I praise you because you made me in such a wonderful way.”

Psalm 139:14

FAMILY

PRAYER: Dear God, help me to show kindness to my family today.

QUESTION: What is one way you can show kindness to someone in your family today?

“Be kind and loving to each other. Forgive each other the same as God forgave you through Christ.”

Ephesians 4:32

THANKFULNESS

PRAYER: God, thank you for..... because.....

QUESTION: How many things can you thank God for? Can you come up with 20?

“Whatever happens, always be thankful.”

1 Thessalonians 5:18

NEIGHBORS

PRAYER: Jesus, please help my neighbors know you. Also, please help them with the hard stuff they may be facing.

QUESTION: What are ways you can show God’s love to your neighbors?

Jesus told his followers, “This is what I tell you to do: Love each other just as I have loved you.”

John 15:12



CAR RIDE CONVERSATION STARTERS



As you travel with kids to/from school or sports, consider these conversation starters questions. Take turns answering questions. Try choosing a number between 1 and 20 and answering that question.

1. If you were invisible where would you go?
2. What kind of job would you like to do when you grow up?
3. Who do you think is stronger, an elephant or a rhino?
4. If you could become any animal for a week, what animal would you be?
5. What's your favorite smell?
6. What's something you're good at doing?
7. What's your favorite part of the day?
8. What's your favorite vegetable?
9. How would you describe God to someone?
10. If you opened a business, what kinds of things would you sell?
11. If you were going to change the world for the better, what's one thing you'd do?
12. What's the weirdest sound you can make?
13. What's your favorite season of the year?
14. If you could meet any TV or movie character, who would you want to meet?
15. How would you define love?
16. If you were going to be famous for something, what would you want to be known for?
17. How would you explain prayer to someone who didn't know what it was?
18. What would you do with \$100,000 if you were given it today?
19. What does it mean to be a Christian?
20. Make up a word and its meaning.

FREE PRINTABLE: School Lunchbox Jokes

When it comes to starting school in the fall, everyone could use a good **LAUGH**. Consider cutting out the following **JOKES** and placing them in your child's **LUNCH**, or share the sheet with your family jokester and encourage them to entertain the family.

What do you call a boomerang that won't come back?

A stick.

What do you call a fish wearing a tie?

So fish'ticated

Why do seagulls fly over the ocean?

Because, if they flew over the bay we'd call them bagels.

I asked my dog, "What's two minus two."

He said nothing.

What do you get when you cross a snail with a porcupine?

A slowpoke.

What kind of tree can fit in one hand?

A palm tree.

How do they keep a basketball arena cool?

They fill it with fans.

What do you call a little bear with no teeth?

A gummy bear.

What do you call a dog that can do magic?

A labra-caddabra-dor

Why did the chocolate chip cookie see a doctor?

He felt crummy.

Why did the kid throw the butter out the window?

So he could see a butter-fly.

What's a pirate's favorite class in school?

Arrrrt