

Get Ready for School with Siblings, Twins, and Multiples

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Each summer families are busily preparing for the new school year for their children. Various rites of passage include:

- Having your children complete summer homework assignments to submit to teachers on the first day of school

- Completing all new school year registration forms

- Taking your children to the doctor to complete any physicals and immunizations

- Visiting the school to locate the grade level classroom and learn more about the newly assigned teacher

- Going shopping for school supplies

- Taking your children shopping for some new school clothes

Get Ready for the New School Schedule

Additionally, parents must slowly prepare their children for the first days of school by ensuring that their sleep schedules align with the new school year schedule. Most kids struggle with adjusting their sleep schedule for school as many like to sleep longer during summer break. Children must also adjust to eating a nutritional breakfast earlier in the day to allow time to travel to school before the first bell rings!

Strategies for Success

With twins, multiples, and added siblings, new school year preparations are multiplied by the number of children starting school. Our twins and their older brother will all attend school this coming fall. Parents have suggested the following strategies to prepare for a new school year:

Take all children shopping for their new shoes at the same time with added support from additional family members. It is unbelievable how fast we can lose a child in the shoe store when the child is asked to practice running in a new pair of shoes to verify a good fit!

Take one child at a time to shop for school supplies and clothing to ensure the child has one-on-one attention. This quality time allows for trouble shooting any first day of school concerns. One child may be anxious about the school bus schedule and another may fear that she will not wake up in time to

get ready for school.

Create a schedule one week before school starts that aligns with the school year schedule. Your children may resist at first but the family will feel successful that they are ready for the new school year.

Plan for school snacks and nutritious lunches.

Discuss with each child their preferences and make a plan on how snacks and lunches will be packed. Older children can help younger children pack lunches the night before school or in the early morning.

Have your children practice selecting their school outfits each night one week before school starts to simplify getting ready in the morning. Once school starts, your children should also complete all homework and have their school assignments and materials assembled each night before school.

Children should practice how they will manage their daily chores during the school year.

Ensure that afterschool schedules allow time for rest, outside exercise, nutritional snacks, homework completion, and the opportunity to talk with parents each day.

Relish school days and model a healthy outlook on the scheduled week to help your children adapt to change and prepare for new challenges.

Take the time for yourself to exercise, play, rest, eat nutritional meals, and enjoy your family.

Simplify dinners to ensure a relaxing evening for all.

Celebrate your family's successes, convene weekly family meetings to address concerns, and plan for lots of family play dates!

Welcome to another great school year!

Mary Ann

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