

SEPARATION & SAFETY

ANXIETY IN

CHILDREN RETURNING TO SCHOOL

HAVE AN OPEN CONVERSATION



- Let your child tell you about their concern(s) of returning to school. Allow them to ask questions, if you're unsure how to answer, do not react in uncertainty but respond by being honest about being unsure and that you'll find the answer
- **Younger Children:** Help them identify some things they used to like about school. you can give them a little "piece of home" .



START TO HELP THEM PRACTICE INDEPENDENCE

- You can do this by being separated for a few hours



GIVE YOUR CHILDREN A ROUTINE BEFORE GOING BACK

- Giving them a routine helps them become comfortable with what's to happen when school comes
- You can also explain to them how their routine will look when it is time to go back to school. So, they are familiar with what's to come



CREATE A SAFETY PLAN TOGETHER

- Explain to your child the school's and their safety
- You can also creatively make a safety plan for a child to execute when they feel unsafe
- Explain to your child the possibilities of altering between in person and virtual school and that you're both committed to the transition
- **Younger Children:** Explain to your child where you will be while they're in school

For information, check out this resource:

<https://childmind.org/article/back-to-school-anxiety-during-covid/>

CHILDREN WITH GENERAL ANXIETY: COPING GUIDE

1 EXPLAIN TO YOUR CHILD OR CHILDREN WHAT FEELING ANXIOUS IS

- Give them ideas that help them identify what seems to be their reason for becoming anxious, this should include the use of age-appropriate language.

2 IDENTIFY STRESSORS THAT TRIGGER YOUR CHILD'S ANXIETY

- This helps children to become more familiarized with the things that can cause them to be anxious.

3 ASK OPEN ENDED QUESTIONS ABOUT HOW THEY'RE FEELING ABOUT THINGS THAT CAUSE THEM ANXIETY

- Asking direct questions can cause your child unwanted anxiety

4 DO NOT AVOID WHAT MAKES YOUR CHILD ANXIOUS OR BRINGS FEAR TO THEM

- When you avoid and remove the things that make your child anxious, it teaches your child that every time they're afraid of something it will be removed.

5 ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD WHEN THEY ARE FEELING ANXIOUS OR WORRIED

- Let them know that everything is okay when they are afraid/anxious that what they are feeling is normal for them and that it will pass over time.

6 VALIDATE THEIR FEARS/ANXIETY AND ASSUMPTIONS

- Allow them to express their feelings of anxiety and affirm that you are with them to help them through their state of fear/anxiety.

7 KEEP A MELLOW TONE OF VOICE AND BODY LANGUAGE

- Pay attention to your body language and tone of voice, when you've noticed something that your child may act in fear of or anxious about. Children can read and sense your body language which can trigger their anxiety.

8 LET YOUR CHILD KNOW THAT THEY ARE DOING GREAT COPING WITH THEIR ANXIETY

- Specifically, tell them what they are doing right, to handle their anxiety.
- Tell them you often that you appreciate them handling their stressors well.

9 HELP YOUR CHILD FIND SOLUTIONS

- This helps your child eliminate some over thoughts they may have about one of their fears. Help your child discover solution their thoughts.

10 HELP YOUR CHILD FIND SOLUTIONS

- This helps your child see that others can relate to how they are feeling.

For more information, check out this resource:

<https://childmind.org/article/what-to-do-and-not-do-when-children-are-anxious/>