

HOW TO GET YOUR STUDENT READY TO RETURN TO SCHOOL THIS FALL

I've seen a lot of parents asking what they can do to get their families ready for the changes in the classroom setting this fall. Here is what I would ask:

1. Get them used to wearing a mask. Pick out fun ones, make sure they do not use a vent that expels germs when they exhale. Make sure they fit. Have them wear them for extended times. Let them know WHY we do it.
2. Help them VISUALIZE what 6 feet is. Draw it in chalk on a sidewalk. Use tape on the floor. If your kids are young, have them incorporate this into their play to practice.
3. Talk to them about how school will look different. We won't be able to collaborate the same way, sit close to each other, the teacher won't be able to come close, etc. They will be far apart, facing forward. PE won't look the same, nor will recess. Brainstorm distancing games to play where you stay far apart. Letting them know this now will help them not resent teachers and school in a few weeks.
4. Let them verbalize any fears or anxiety they may have about returning to school. Ask them how they feel. Let them know the safety procedures your school is put in place and your expectations for them following them.
5. Practice good hygiene and talk to your child about how important it is that they let you know if they're having any symptoms of COVID-19.
6. Once again, let them know things won't be the same. This will mean no field experiences, gatherings or school festivals, no more hugging your friend or playing with their hair. This is all temporary. It is disappointing and it is OK to be disappointed. It is not their, the teachers' or your fault.
7. We will be safest if everyone follows the new guidelines, and we will be happiest if everyone understands the changes and embraces them for the temporary.
8. Flexibility is the theme of 2020! We may not teach as much content, and we may not get to do what we normally do. We may be in and out of the classroom. This is all temporary. Everyone will be experiencing it on some level. It's not ideal, but it is where we are, and we're in it together.
9. If you want your kids back in the classroom, lay low the next few weeks, wear a mask, and only do what is absolutely necessary. WEAR the MASK!