

The Wellness Exchange

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Back-to-School Preparations

Are You Ready for the Back-to-School Transition?

What? Back to school...already? Transitioning between summer's easy schedule and school's more regimented one can be stressful for both children and adults. By preparing now, each family member can begin to transition smoothly.



Changing routines can be stressful and can cause children and adults to resist necessary adjustments. Getting prepared ahead of time is important to decrease this stress. Summer may mean a slower pace and less stress, and with the transitions of preparing for back-to-school time, a check list may be necessary.

What's it like to go back to school? Imagine a job change for you every 12 months. Imagine a new boss, new co-workers, new tasks and new expectations. Your kids also may be in a new building this year, which makes it even harder to feel comfortable. Perhaps your children are heading off to college - are they going away? Will your college-bound children be living on their own for the first time or adjusting to a new dorm or apartment? Talk about expectations, realities, concerns, and safety.

Parents need support, too. Remember, your children will adapt more easily to school schedules if they are exposed to routines at home. Remember to tap into your available resources.

A Checklist for Parents

Start talking! By talking now, you begin the preparation process and can ease into the "back-to-school" transition without many bumps.

For children going off to college, talk about living with a roommate, insurance plans, emergency centers, managing money, eating habits and exercise, as well as drugs, alcohol, and sex.

Establish new routines. Discuss "back-to-school" bed times. Be clear and specific. The week prior to the start of school, begin your new routine and allow time to adjust to the new schedule.

Go over schedules. In addition to discussing bed times and establishing new routines, talk about other schedules. This contributes to effective communication, and is beneficial for giving children of all ages responsibility.

Stay organized Assess each child's needs for supplies. Go through clothing as well as school supplies. Prepare in advance for a shopping day. Involve your child in picking out his or her own supplies.



Safety plans. Regardless of age, review safety plans with your children. Make sure to go over fire escape routes at home, how to call 911, and important emergency phone numbers.

Incentives

Just prior to the start of the school year, discuss grade expectations, chores, and homework with your children. Keep expectations realistic. Make sure you can help your children get the resources they need for their assignments.

Be realistic when offering a reward for good grades. Choose rewards which give your children something to work towards and put it in writing so there is no discrepancy in the future.

Your attitude as a parent goes a long way in motivating and encouraging your children. Be involved and be positive.

Keep in mind that every school year brings on a different set of feelings and experiences. Be sensitive to what your child may find new and scary. Also, shy children need more encouragement during such transitional times - be patient.

For more information call BHS and speak with a Master's Level Clinician. We are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week! Call Today! or visit:

www.pueblo.gsa.gov

www.pbs.org/parents/goingtoschool/before_school.html

www.nasponline.org/resources/home_school/b2shandout.aspx



Balancing Work and Family

How's Your Balancing Act?



If you have a family and a career outside the home, you really have two jobs: one at work and one at home. Your workday doesn't end at 5 p.m. In fact, for a lot of us, our day is really just beginning when we leave work – with the hardest part yet to come. Everyday becomes a balancing act.

Today's Challenges

60 percent of working parents feel considerable conflict between work demands and time spent at home.

-www.bluesuitmom.com

- More families with two working parents.
- Changing family roles and expectations.
- New stress created by technology in conjunction with higher work expectations.
- Child care is time consuming for both men and women.



Time Management is the Foundation for Success!

If there is one universal problem experienced by working people with families, it's not having enough time to get everything done. Whether you are male or female, single or married, you need to pay attention to the importance of balancing work and family.

There never seems to be enough hours in the day to manage both work and family obligations. Time management at home and at work can give you a sense of accomplishment and peace of mind. Here are a few time management tips for home and work:

Avoid the Morning Rush- Is your morning chaos affecting your work performance? Do you find yourself rushing each morning with no breathing time? Take inventory! Try waking up a bit earlier (even an extra 15 minutes can be helpful). Plan the night before. Prepare what to wear and organize yourself for the next day.

Commuting Time - Use commuting time to "shift gears" from work mode to home mode (and vice versa). Try to relax by listening to music and taking some deep breaths. Deep breathing helps muscles relax, bringing needed oxygen to the body and decreasing the heart rate.

Be Realistic - Throw the notion of being perfect out the window! Learn how to make compromises without short changing yourself. Incorporate the word "flexibility" into your vocabulary.



Let go! Simplify - Don't try to do it all. Practice good time management skills: make lists and use them. Remember to delegate where/when possible. Help yourself establish a well balanced life both personally and professionally.

Take Care of Yourself!

As you focus on taking care of the many responsibilities of home and work life, don't forget to take care of yourself.

- * Monitor your diet and stay away from fast food and junk food.
- * Exercise is a great way to relieve day-to-day stress.
- * Schedule time to relax!

" Focusing on what you can control, and coping with what you can't control will help you invest your energy wisely."



Take Time for 10 Things

1. **Work** - enjoy what you do.
2. **Think** - it's the source of power.
3. **Play** - it's the secret of youth.
4. **Read** - it's the foundation of knowledge.
5. **Give** - helping others often provides us with a sense of satisfaction.
6. **Enjoy Friends and Family** - relationships can be instrumental to your success.
7. **Love** - important to give & receive.
8. **Dream** - it can regenerate you!
9. **Laugh** - it is the best medicine.
10. **Plan** - set priorities and remember

Balancing family with professional life is tricky and often a frustrating challenge. It is important to consider your priorities and evaluate your choices so that you can have time to work, time to play, and time to make life as fulfilling as it can be.

