

Dear Counselling Corner:

Our family had a great summer but now both of our children are having a difficult time getting back into the school routine again. I really thought that this would have happened by now as we are in October! We are having meltdowns, poor sleep, non-compliance and my spouse and I are feeling exhausted. Some mornings one of our children doesn't even want to go to school, even though they have told us that they really like their teacher and have lots of friends. Oh my gosh. Can you offer some suggestions to help us find a healthy balance again? Thank you!

Sleep deprived guardians**Dear Guardians:**

Please know that you and your family are not alone. Returning to school is a big change. Routines and schedules are really helpful in assisting our children adjust to a different pace of life with new expectations. A **schedule** is the big picture of the plan of what is going to happen. A **routine** refers to the steps required to be successful in completing the schedule. When children have routines in place, they tend to feel safer and more comfortable as well as experiencing a greater sense of control in their lives. Schedules and routines help kids to understand what is happening now and what is going to happen next. They can also help children develop positive relationships and increase self-confidence and independence.

How can we get kids to get into the 'routine'? To help our children succeed, try these strategies:

- Use visuals (Easy Daysies is a great resource and was actually created by a Maple Ridge Teacher! <https://www.easydaysies.com/>)
- Review your day plan or schedule at the beginning of each day as well as throughout the day
- Model the routine to your child so that they understand what it looks like. Make it fun!
- Create morning checklists to help your child remember what needs to be done before they leave for school. Try creating afterschool and bedtime checklists as well.
- Provide positive and descriptive feedback.

Here is a great article I found which discusses the importance of a daily routine:

<https://www.petitjourney.com.au/10-reasons-a-daily-routine-is-important-for-your-child-and-how-to-set-one/>

Here is another cool idea I found to help with getting ready for bed:

<https://www.facebook.com/share/r/hpvQcvXq11GnEobM/?mibextid=Xtsd1Y>

The Counselling Corner is intended to offer some helpful ideas, encouragement, and insight on a variety of topics to support your child's social and emotional learning. Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns at hchang@sd43.bc.ca.

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