

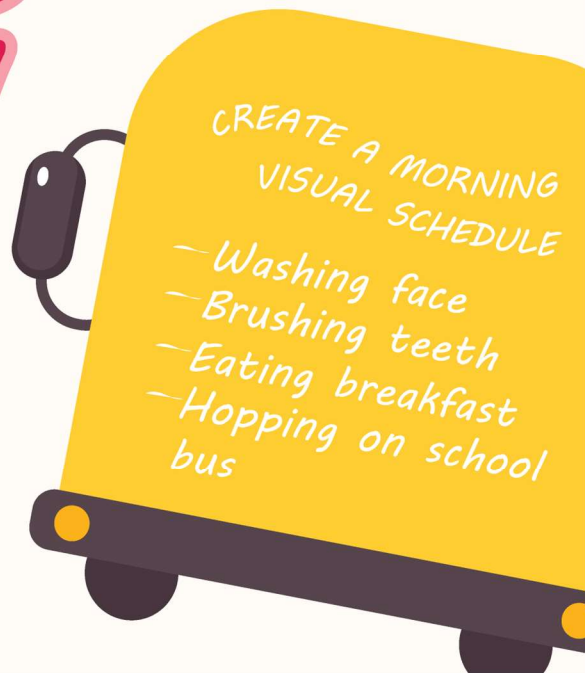


COMMUNICATION
AND COLLABORATION



Back to School Readiness Guide!

Consistency is key!
Morning routines



PRACTICE SCHOOL
READINESS
PROGRAMS



-  Sitting at a table
-  Sharing toys
-  Following simple instructions

Back-to-School with ACP!

There are so many things to be excited about this time of year! The fall season brings us lots of changes. The leaves are showing the beginning signs of their transformation. Bright yellow school buses begin their caravan through the city to pick up eager little children. Freshly decorated classrooms are buzzing with the energy of excited teachers ready for a new school year. With all this transformation, families are feeling the highs and lows of seasonal change.

Just like the anticipation of joining a new team or moving to a new neighborhood, we can empathize with little ones who are both excited for the start of the school year but also a little nervous about the *what-ifs*. To help families maximize the wonderful potential of this time of year, Autism Care Partners' Clinical Director in Middleboro, MA, Nicole Nakhoul thoughtfully put together the following guide to help you more comfortably navigate the near future.

If your child is newly entering school, **make sure there's been communication and collaboration between teachers, BCBAs, SLPs, etc.** to ensure everybody is on the same page before the start of the school year! This pre-planning can help ensure everyone is aware of what plans are in place to support your child's needs. It also helps your family build rapport with the people who will spend so much time with your child.

Practice working on various school readiness programs before the start of the year! This can include completing simple tasks while sitting at a table, sharing toys with peers, following simple instructions, etc. Transitioning from home life to school life can be hard for any child, especially if they aren't prepared to be asked to raise their hand to ask questions, ask to use the potty, and be on a strict routine determined by their teacher. Helping your kiddo practice what is to come can help them more comfortably transition to this new environment—or remember what it's like to be in school if they are a returning student!

Create a morning visual schedule to follow! This will help your child get into a consistent routine. These schedules may include getting out of bed, washing your face, brushing your teeth, eating breakfast, and then getting on the school bus. If your child has received ABA services, we frequently use visual schedules for children to better understand what is to come, how to accomplish the many steps between tasks like waking up and getting ready, and enhance their independence. Starting now can make the start of school that much easier!

Consistency is key! **Keep a consistent schedule** when beginning to practice morning routines. Make sure your child is waking up around the same time each morning while completing the same or similar tasks each day. Even slight changes over the weekend can hinder the progress we make throughout the week when keeping a consistent routine before and after school.

Once the school year does start, **ensure there is ongoing communication between you and the teachers!** Make a home log that highlights your child's sleep schedule, the time they woke up, the food they ate, etc. Also, ask the teacher to complete a log to send home each day which can highlight various skills and activities your child worked on at school. This can be a very helpful resource to ensure your child is getting the support they need when not in your care. This can also be a great reinforcer for all the milestones your child will reach this school year!

The start of the school year brings new energy to family life with abrupt changes to routine, social environments, and more. With a little preparation before the school year starts, this time of year can be a little less intimidating to your kiddo. Of course, you know your child and their needs best. Is there a strategy that has really helped your child and your family each fall? Consider sharing your insight and this article with your network! You can also reach out to Autism Care Partners at Welcome@AutismCarePartners.com to discuss ways ACP can help support your child and connect with Nicole Nakhoul on LinkedIn to stay in touch with an exceptional, experienced ABA provider.

We're sending you best wishes for the new school year from your optimistic team at Autism Care Partners!