



Back to school can be a stressful time for both parents and children alike. Hill Physicians has prepared some tips for physical and emotional health to get this school year off to a healthy start.*

First Month of School

Be Available to Help Your Child Adjust

Kids need some time to adjust at the start of a new school year and you will play a big role. Consider these tips to help both of you transition.

- If possible, postpone business trips and reschedule meetings and other appointments that prevent you from spending time with your child.
- Make sure your child knows how to reach you during school hours (and after school hours if you will not be with your child immediately). Review what to do in an emergency, including who to contact - a family member or neighbor, for example - if you are unreachable.
- Arrange play dates and get-togethers with classmates. This can establish positive social relationships with peers.

Your Homework

As your child gets into the routine of school, take time to be active in his or her education.

- **Review textbooks and other learning materials available.** Share your enthusiasm for the subjects and your confidence in your child's ability to learn the content.
- **Incorporate learning activities** that reinforce what your child is learning at school into everyday activities.
- **Familiarize yourself with school professionals.** Get to know your child's teacher(s), the principal, the vice principal, the nurse, the security staff and the after-school program staff.
- **Research after school programs** and consider enrolling your child in one that meets his or her academic or physical activity needs or stimulates his or her creative interests.
- **Mark your calendar and get involved at school!** Note important dates such as "Back to School Night" and other special events. Volunteer to help through the parent-teacher organization,

booster club or other organization. Help your child understand that school life and home life are linked and that you know and care what's going on.

- **Watch for signs of stress.** It could be concern over learning new subjects, meeting new people or even confrontation with a bully. Let your children know you will listen without judgment. Children may be embarrassed to talk about anxiety, so watch for signs such as:
 - Clinging, or signs of separation anxiety
 - Bed or day wetting
 - Avoiding school activities
 - Nervous habits such as chewing nails or twirling hair

[Read and understand More About Bullying here..](#)

Kids starting a new school may experience an extra level of stress and have a hard time handling it.

[Learn more about Helping Your Child Transition Into Junior High or Middle School here...](#)

Health Check-up:

To start the school year off right, make sure your child is in good physical and mental health.

School Year Immunizations:

Beginning in 2012 all students entering 7th grade need to provide proof of a TDAP booster within 30 days of starting school.

- Even if your child is up to date with their immunizations and does not need another shot, you will still need to provide proof of the vaccination in order for your child to remain in school after their initial 30 days. We recommend contacting your physicians' office to check on the entire family's immunization records and ensure you are all up to date with preventive screenings and vaccinations as well as requesting documentation for this new school requirement.
- **Make sure your child is up-to-date on all immunizations.** Don't forget about boosters! Contact your pediatrician or family physician to confirm that your child is current on all recommended immunizations. [Download an immunization record for school.](#)
- [Visit Hill Physicians Children's Interactive Health Center](#) to learn about childhood immunizations, growth and development stages, and more.
- [Visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's site for school immunization preparation.](#)
- **Schedule an annual or biannual physical exam** ([see Hill Physicians Preventive Guidelines for Children and Teens for recommended frequency](#)) and a semi-annual dental checkup if your child is due.
- **Vision exam:** As children grow their eyesight can change from year to year. They may not tell you or understand that they are having a hard time reading books, or the blackboard until their learning begins to suffer. Be sure that their physical includes a vision check as well.
- **Prepare a list of important health and emergency information** the school should have, including allergies, other health conditions such as asthma or ADHD, current medications (if any) and emergency contact information. [Parents of children with ADHD can help children get the most out of school with these tips...](#)

Stay Healthy All Year

Whether returning to school, heading off to college or just starting pre-school, there are specific health concerns when children are clustered together in classrooms and dorms.

The following common, year-round health concerns for school age children:

- [Whooping Cough \(pertussis\):](#) became an epidemic in California in 2011. Learn what you need to know about [symptoms and treatments...](#)
- Head lice: Is your child scratching more than usual? These parasites are very common in schools. They hop from body to body without discrimination. [Here's how to spot and treat a head lice infestation...](#)
- Sports Injuries: Children can be more likely to suffer from sports injuries than adults for a number of reasons. Because they are still growing and developing these injuries can have a lasting, permanent effect. [Learn how to prevent and treat children's sports injuries...](#)
- Common colds & flu: School children can be more susceptible to colds because they might be exposed to germs they've never been exposed to before. Look for Hill Physicians tips on avoiding and [combating the common cold and flu here...](#)
- [Pinkeye, or conjunctivitis:](#) While most schools will request a child stay home if infected, it's not always apparent and can be shared from student to student. Pain around the eyes, a watery or pus discharge from the eyes and whites looking pink all can be signs. [Learn more about self-care for pinkeye or conjunctivitis here...](#)
- [Meningitis:](#) This potentially life-threatening illness occurs most often in children, teens and young adults. Vaccination against bacterial meningitis is recommended for adolescents, teens, young adults and immunocompromised people. [Learn more about the symptoms of meningitis and immediate actions to take...](#)

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**The information provided is meant to aid in your education on health and wellness. Hill Physicians strongly recommends that you seek the advice of a medical professional for any and all medical and/or psychological ailments.*

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