

Ed Extras

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No More Morning Madness!

Calm. Relaxed. Smiling. Words seldom heard when parents describe the morning routine on school days. No one wants to start their day in a frenzied mess of untied shoes and breakfast in hand as the school bus approaches. Follow these five short recommendations for smoothing out those rough mornings.

Pack lunches the night before

If your child brings their lunch to school, pack it up the night before. A simple trick for keeping those PB&J's from getting soggy is to spread peanut butter on both pieces of bread. Complaints about apple slices that have browned? Dip apple slices into orange juice or Sprite before packing them up.

Pack the book bag

As you're packing lunch, ask your child to pack her bookbag. Double check for things like library books, field trip permission forms, or other special items that need to be returned to school.

Think breakfast menu

Work with your child to write a short list of acceptable healthy breakfast foods. Turn the list into a menu that can be posted on the refrigerator and ask your child to fill it out before going to bed. Or, if it's too hard to choose at night, a short list will make it easier to choose from in the morning.

You're wearing that?

Many kids make fashion choices that differ from what parents may choose. Decide ahead of time what's appropriate to wear to school. Then, let your child choose from those items. That sense of individuality and choice is important for many school-age kids.

Go ahead, set that alarm clock

Now set it for 10 minutes earlier. Until a good school routine is established, recognize that everything will take extra time. Give your child (and yourself!) the cushion of a few extra minutes. Once your routine is in place, you may find you can get up a little later.

These five recommendations might not smooth out every wrinkle in your morning routine, but they may leave your family feeling a little calmer, relaxed, and who knows, maybe smiling!

For all of our back-to-school ideas, visit: www.ReadingRockets.org/calendar/backtoschool

