



Kids experience a lot of different emotions when it comes to going back to school after a break, ranging from feeling really excited and eager to worried, anxious and even fearful. Below are some suggestions for parents and teachers on helping kids transition back to school:

- **Prepare kids for their return to school:**

Don't let the end of the holidays and winter break creep up on you or your kids! Remind kids that school will be starting back soon. Mention the positive things about school they like and miss such as their friends or classes/subjects they like/love. Helping them get excited about getting back to school will certainly make the transition easier for all involved.

Parents/Caregivers:

- **Get Back into a Normal Routine:**

Ideally, it is best to maintain your normal daily routine, even during the break. Unfortunately, for many of us, this isn't often practical as we do have to adjust our routines to accommodate the holidays and the festivities surrounding them.

- Kids often look to us as an example, whether they admit it or not. So as hard as it may be, getting back into a regular routine where you get up at your normal time and get everyone up, dressed and ready for the day a few days before the break is over will make it much easier to get kids on board and back into their normal school week routine. Having breakfast and lunch at the same time during the day as they would at school or as close to it as possible is also very helpful, especially for younger school aged kids.
- Enough rest and sleep. It's easy and quite common to change and break the bedtime routine and overall sleep schedule during this time of year. Get back to your kid's normal school day sleep and wake time schedules a few days before they actually return to school.

Teachers/Administrators

- **Goal Setting/New Year Resolution:**

Engage and encourage students to participate in meaningful goal setting for themselves with their interests as well as their academics now that the new year has begun. Frame it as one of their New Year Resolutions.

- Set timelines for smaller goals that lead to completing their overall goal. Just like adults, when kids see some progress towards the goals they set, they are more likely to continue working toward that goal.
- Recognize and/or celebrate the completion of smaller goals. Often times, the overall goals take a lot of time to complete and recognizing progress helps kids remain focused and motivated in their overall goal.

- **Acknowledge an Extended Break Just Happened:**

Allow some adjustment, processing and socialization time for students when they return.

- Like most adults, it takes time, especially for kids, to readjust back into routines.
- Avoid lots of homework the first week back. While teachers and administrators often feel the pressure to get through lessons and the curriculum by the end of the year or by standardized testing time, having heavy school workloads, especially after an extended break, can backfire. Lighter and more enjoyable homework the first week back helps kids get back into the groove of school and often times helps them adjust more easily.

- **Be Observant of Student Behaviors:**

- As always, pay attention and distinguish between students who just need a little time to get back in the routine of school and those who might be struggling with sadness/depression or other mental health issues. If you are concerned about a student who might be struggling emotionally, seek out and make a referral to your SCIP team and/or talk with your school social worker or counselor.
- For more information about SCIP in your school, contact your school team leader or visit our website at www.scipnebraska.com.

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