



CREATING A NEW BACK TO SCHOOL RHYTHM

ELEMENTARY

The transition from summertime to back-to-school can happen so quickly that we're already in our new routine before we even realize it. Below are some suggestions for how to create an intentional and meaningful back-to-school rhythm for a kid in this phase*:

*(*Please note that many of these are transferable to other phases. Feel free to look through each list for additional ideas!)*

SEND YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL FEELING AFFIRMED. Say a short prayer over them as they leave, so they know that God is on their side throughout the day. Make it a practice of writing and sending notes of encouragement in your child's lunchbox or backpack so they are also reminded you are on their side.

EACH DAY WHEN YOUR KID GETS HOME FROM SCHOOL, HAVE AN AFTER SCHOOL "CHECKLIST" POSTED FOR THEM TO FOLLOW. Start off with at least 15 minutes of downtime, add in homework time, chore time, bath time, play time, dinner time, and family time. The next time you hear, "I'm bored!" or, "Can I play with your phone?" point them toward the checklist.

CREATE A DEDICATED SPACE IN YOUR HOME FOR YOUR ELEMENTARY-SCHOOLER TO DO HOMEWORK/CLASSWORK. It can be as simple as a special chair at your kitchen table with a placemat that only appears at homework time. Whatever it is, set it up with pencils, a sharpener, good lighting, and peace and quiet. Establishing healthy study routines early-on will help your kid now and in the phases to come.

SET ASIDE SOME TIME FOR A NIGHT OF CRAFTING. Grab some cardstock and any craft supplies you have on-hand and create several bookmarks for your child to use throughout the school year. Spend your time together talking about the books you read (or didn't read!) and the friends you had in school growing up.

GIVE SPACE FOR YOUR KIDS TO TALK ABOUT THEIR DAY. Make sure to sit down and have dinner together as often as possible. Go around the table and have each person tell one high and one low from their day. Often times, kids will be most open to honest conversations when you tuck them in at night. Even when your kids are old enough to go to the bed on their own, try to keep a tucking-in ritual for as long as you can.

For fresh ideas on connecting with your child every week, download the Parent Cue App, available on iTunes and Google Play.