

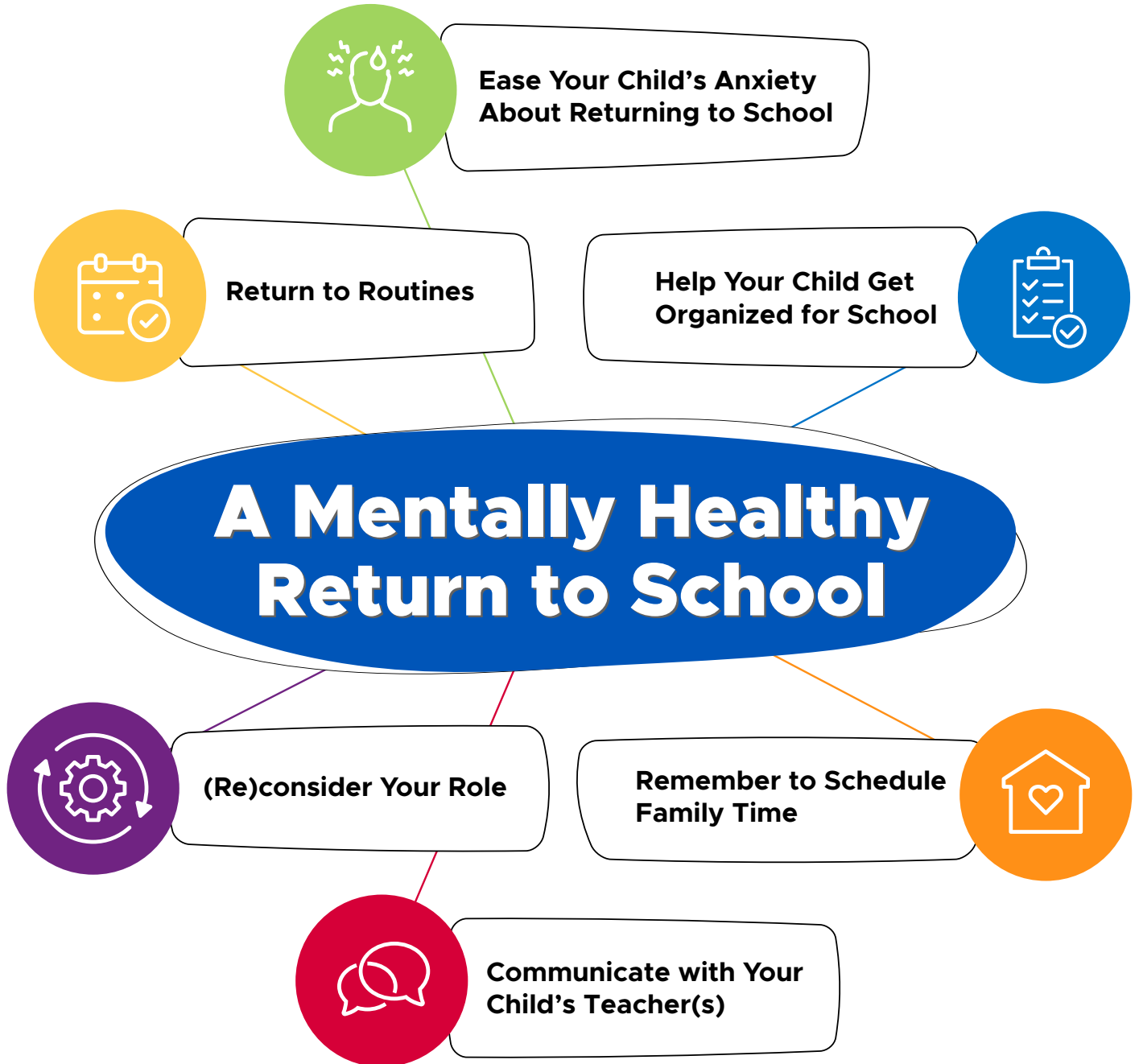


A Parent's Guide:

PREPARING FOR A MENTALLY HEALTHY RETURN TO SCHOOL

A Parent's Guide to:

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Ease Your Child's Anxiety about Returning to School:

First, ensure that you are properly managing your own feelings of uncertainty or worry about COVID-19 and school re-entry. Children often pick up on the feelings of important adults in their lives. Taking the time to help yourself be calm and levelheaded is one of the best things that you can do to help your child feel good about returning to school.

Resources:

1. [Returning to a New Normal: 12 Tips for Handling Uncertainty](#)
2. [How to Handle Anxiety Over Back-to-School Decisions](#)
3. [Tips for Easing Children's Anxiety About Returning to School During COVID-19](#)

It will also be helpful to prepare your child in advance for any changes at school, for example, wearing PPE and physical distancing. Tips for getting your child comfortable with wearing a mask:

Resources:

1. [A Toolkit For Helping Your Child Wear A Mask During COVID-19](#)
2. [What To Do If Your Child Cannot Wear A Mask](#)

Video Resources:

1. [That TVOkids Show's Dr. Cheddar – Kids' COVID-19 Questions](#)
2. [How to Wear a Mask](#)
3. [Kids' Mask Questions](#)
4. [Sick Kids - What is Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\) \(a video for children\)](#)
5. [Physical Distancing \(for kids\)](#)
6. [COVID-19 Testing \(Nasal Swab\)](#)

Remember that it is normal for some children to be nervous about returning to school, even outside the context of a pandemic. There are lots of things that parents can do to help: [Helping Your Child Cope with Back-to-School Anxiety](#)



Return to Routines:

For many families, the spring was a whirlwind. With all the changes and uncertainty, most of us tried our best just to get through each day. This means that our usual routines may have gone out the window. It is now important to get back to normal routines well in advance of the first day of school, as this will greatly help with easing the transition for your child:

Resources:

1. [Helping Kids Back Into the School Routine](#)
2. [Back to School, Back to Routines](#)

It is particularly important to do your best to make sure that your child gets enough sleep: [Sleep Tips: How to Help Your Child Get A Good Night's Sleep](#)



Help Your Child Get Organized for School:

When we are disorganized, it is easy to feel stressed and overwhelmed. Children are the same way, and they often need support to learn organization and other executive functioning skills. Working with your child on getting organized will help your whole family feel better about starting a new school year.

FOR CHILDREN RETURNING TO SCHOOL

Resources:

[From Parent to Coach Taking on a New Mindset to Get Your Child Organized](#)

[15 DIY Ways to Get Organized for Back-to-School Season](#)

[Helping Kids Who Struggle With Executive Functions](#)

FOR CHILDREN LEARNING REMOTELY

[Tips for Caregivers and Parents on Schooling at Home: What Role Do Executive Skills Play?](#)



(Re)consider Your Role :

While you may have done double duty as both parent and teacher during the school closures, take some time to deliberately plan how you will support your child's learning this fall.

For children returning to school - it is ok to move away from the teacher role, but ensure that you continue to provide your child with support and structure for getting schoolwork done, and to help with problem-solving bigger challenges.

For children learning remotely - take stock of how things went in the spring, and what you might want to do differently this fall: [How to Set Priorities This School Year](#)



Remember to Schedule Family Time:

Amid the busy back-to-school period, remember to prioritize spending quality time together as a family. Schedule fun activities for evenings and weekends to help you and your child feel relaxed and connected. It is also important to do brief, regular check-ins with your child, during family mealtimes, for example. This will help your child know that you are making time for their needs and will give them space to bring up any worries or concerns that they may develop as the school year starts up.

Mental health promotion practices to try at home: [12 Easy and Fun Mental Health Practices to Try With Your Children at Home](#)

Gratitude and kindness activities for families: [Activities For You and Your Child at Home](#)



Communicate with Your Child's Teacher(s)

As this is a school year like no other, it is particularly important to make early contact with your child's teacher(s), and to communicate frequently. This will ensure that everyone is comfortable and receives clear information in a timely manner: [Tips for Partnering With Teachers in the New School Year](#)



If you have questions, be sure to visit [dsbn.org](https://www.dsb.org) to read the **Return to School FAQ**, or contact your child's school principal.