

1

TIPS TO THE PARENTS TO GET YOUR CHILD READY FOR SCHOOL

- 1. Easy Does It.** Adjusting to new schedules, earlier morning alarms, and stricter meal times can be difficult for children. Take it easy and allow your family to adjust slowly by starting two weeks before the fall and winter routine has to be followed. Start with moving bedtimes or wake times ten or 15 minutes at a time and adjusting meal times by 30 minutes or so. A longer—and slower—transition will help everyone involved.
- 2. Three Things.** The demands and expectations put on children, parents, and families today can be overwhelming. Many families spend all their time running from one place to another just to stay caught up with everyone else. Don't let others decide how your family should spend its time, let your family decide. Have each member of your family write down the three things that are most important to him/her in the fall and winter time, and then have a family meeting to find a way to make sure each person's items have a time in the schedule.
- 3. Everyone Chooses a Responsibility.** Once you know what your new schedule will be like, let each member of the family decide what they want to take responsibility for. For example, decide who will make sure people are up on time, who will make the meals, who will drive to specific events, and who

will take out the garbage. You might be surprised by some of your children's choices, and you just might be amazed at how well they follow through with those choices. When someone chooses to do something on their own, they are much more likely to follow through than if someone else tells them to do it.

- 4. Plan Time for You. Don't forget to book yourself some time in that new schedule. You need time for you and your top three priorities just like your children do. Set a good example for your children by showing them a healthy way to take care of yourself.**
- 5. Set Expectations Early. At least one week before the fall and winter starts, sit down with the family and explain what the new schedule will be like, what activities will be occurring, and what to expect. Knowing what will be going on will make it easier for everyone to stay on track.**
- 6. Review Your Parenting Values. Now is the time to get yourself ready for being the parent you want to be in the fall – review your list of parenting values. If you don't have a list of values, refer to the www.Coach-Parenting.com to develop your list. Pick one value to focus on for the month of September and see how many ways you can bring that value into your everyday parenting during the month.**
- 7. Celebrate Summer. Find a way to celebrate, remember the summer you just had. Talk about trips you took, your favorite days, or things you want to remember; make scrapbook pages, a poster to hang on the wall, or a family memory book together.**

Don't let these last couple weeks of summer slip by unnoticed, use them to round out the summer.

- 8. Family Time.** Family time can be so scarce during the school year: find one last way to spend time together as a family before the fall and winter rush starts. A few examples are sitting in your living room, having a family game night, going on a short trip, or making dinner together. Be together as a family, talk, share stories, smile, and laugh.
- 9. Watch the Sunset or Sunrise.** Watching the day begin or end can be very grounding – find a quiet spot to watch the sun rise or set with your family. Make an effort to become connected to the earth, the day, and the cycle of life. Take a deep breath and remind yourself that schedules and hectic days aren't always the most important things in life---find a way to ground yourself now so you won't be pulled, pushed, and tugged by the less important things when fall and winter hits.
- 10. Hug Your Children.** Let your children know that they are the most important to you. Before You send them off to school, activities, child care, sports, etc., let them know how much you Love them, how much you enjoy being with them, and how much you enjoy watching them Grow and learn. It's a bit "sappy," and many kids will brush it off with a drawn out "Mom" or "Dad", but they'll get the message and remember it.