

Back to School During COVID-19

Whether your child is returning to school, continuing to take classes online, or participating in a mix of in-person and remote learning, you may have concerns about how the school year will go. Common worries include:

- ▶ Your child contracting COVID-19 at school and falling ill or bringing it home to the rest of the family
- ▶ Child care concerns related to your child taking classes online or possible future school closures
- ▶ Your child falling behind on coursework because of difficulties with remote learning
- ▶ Unanticipated expenses if college-age students are living at home rather than at school

These and other concerns may be increasing back-to-school stress. These tips may be helpful:

- ▶ **Talk about COVID-19 safety.** Remind your child that it's important to follow the school's rules about social distancing, frequent hand washing, and wearing masks. Encourage your child to maintain these practices even if their friends don't. Remind older children that they could spread the illness even if they don't get sick.
- ▶ **Create a "care kit."** Make space in your child's backpack or locker for emergency supplies, such as a spare mask, hand sanitizer and wipes, and extra pens and pencils. Remind your child that it's important to reserve these supplies for their use only.

- ▶ **Set up a tracking system for remote learning.** This will help your child stay current with online schoolwork, while also ensuring he or she has unstructured time to talk with friends or play.
- ▶ **Empathize.** Your child may be sad about missing out on extracurricular activities or time with friends. Acknowledge that this will be an unusual school year and that it's disappointing to give up favorite activities. Avoid making promises about when these opportunities will be available again.

LifeMatters can provide suggestions on how to help your child adjust to an unusual school year. Call 24/7/365.




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