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SET UP SYSTEMS FOR BACK TO SCHOOL SUCCESS: A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE FOR FAMILIES TO MAKE THE MOST OF THE TRANSITION

As the back-to-school season approaches, it's a great opportunity for parents to harness the energy and structure that comes with the start of a new school year. It is an opportunity to reset and create the best learning experience and position your child for success. Here's a step-by-step guide to help families make the most of this transition.



Step 1 Define Priorities

- Start by sitting down with all family members and making a list of their commitments and top priorities for the upcoming fall. Include both work and personal goals for each family member.

Step 2 Create a Comprehensive Schedule

- Using the priorities you've identified, create a comprehensive schedule that accommodates everyone's commitments. Consider school schedules, work hours, extracurricular activities, and personal time. Make sure the schedule fits together like puzzle pieces, allowing for a balanced distribution of responsibilities.

Step 3 Prioritize Self-Care

- Begin with prioritizing your own needs and self-care. This is especially important for parents who often put themselves last. Allocate time for your own projects, work, and personal goals. Avoid falling into the trap of guilt or overwhelm.

Step 4 Shift into the School Routine

- Gradually transition your family into the school routine before classes start. This could include adjusting sleep schedules, setting up morning routines, and creating organized spaces for school essentials. Start these preparations at least a month before school begins. Refer to the PDF titled "Preparing Your Child for a New School Year."



Step 5 Implement Systems

- Establish systems that make daily tasks more streamlined. Set up stations, like a breakfast station, to encourage children's independence in preparing for school. Clear out closets, organize spaces, and empower your children to take charge of their morning tasks.

Step 6 Set Boundaries for Work Time

- If you work from home, define clear boundaries around your work hours. Communicate to your family when you'll be focused on work, and when you'll be available to spend time together. Having a designated workspace and clear time blocks can help increase productivity.

Step 7 Encourage Independence

- Empower your children to become more independent. Teach them how to handle morning routines, get dressed, and make their own breakfast. This not only eases your workload but also helps them develop life skills.

Step 8 Plan for Relaxation

- After a summer of multitasking and childcare, plan a day of relaxation for yourself before diving into work and personal goals. Designate the first day of school as your "Hooky Mom Day," where you take a break from adult responsibilities and treat yourself to a leisurely day.



Step 9

Maintain Consistency

- Whether it's summertime or school time, maintain consistency in routines and expectations. This helps ease the transition for your children and makes the back-to-school period smoother. Recognize and honour that routines can change as other priorities become significant.

Step 10

Set Boundaries for Work Time

- As school begins, celebrate the successful transition as a family. Whether it's a special breakfast, a family outing, or a small celebration at home, take a moment to acknowledge the hard work everyone has put into preparing for the new school year.
- By following these steps, you can make the most of the back-to-school energy and create a smoother transition for your family into the fall season. Remember, planning and communication are key to ensuring a successful start to the school year for both parents and children.

For more support, take a look at our community resources below or reach out to us at info@aocan.org, or call 519-208-5333.

- **Community Resources:** <https://aocan.org/resources/>

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