

# Preparing Children for the New School Year

Children, parents, and caregivers have navigated many changes over the past year and a half...from online learning, mask wearing and social distancing to cancelled events and grieving losses. It's been hard, but you made it through and are stronger than you were before the pandemic. You are resilient! That strength will continue to help you as you embark on a new school year with more changes ahead.

*Here are some tips for parents/caregivers to prepare children for the upcoming school year...*

## Plan

- Structure and routine can provide a sense of control during times of uncertainty
  - ◆ Ensure regular bedtime and wake-up times
  - ◆ Create a daily schedule

## Talk

- Talk to your child about their school's plans for reopening so they know what to expect
- Ask your child about how they feel about the upcoming school year and what they might be worried about, as well as what they are excited about

## Observe and Support

- Watch for signs of stress, including changes in your child's eating and sleeping habits, and shifts in their mood and behavior
- Comfort your child and remind them that their school and their teachers are working hard to keep them safe at school

## Connect

- For coping tips and other emotional support resources to help you and your family navigate through this uncertain time, connect with [NY Project Hope](https://www.nyprojecthope.org).

*NY Project Hope is a FEMA-funded program that provides emotional support for NY State residents in response to COVID-19. We offer a statewide Emotional Support Helpline staffed by trained crisis counselors who help callers talk through their emotions and find resources to help them to cope during this challenging time. Local NY Project Hope Provider Agencies are also available in several NYS counties offering crisis counseling in their local communities; click [here](#) to learn more! In addition, the NY Project Hope website is filled with supportive materials and resources that folks can access anytime at [www.nyprojecthope.org](https://www.nyprojecthope.org). **Our services are always confidential, free, and anonymous***

*NY Project Hope is a statewide program of the NYS Office of Mental Health and is funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.*

