

for **Helping Kids Prepare** **GOING BACK TO SCHOOL**



Kids have experienced a lot over the past few months. This guide provides a few tips for how to help them prepare for their return to school this fall.

1 START THE CONVERSATION

Start talking about it now instead of the night before school starts. Find a comfortable time to bring up the subject with each child. Check in regularly as information and details are released. Confirm that change and uncertainty will be present for the near future and that it is important for each of us to find ways to cope and adapt to this reality. Sometimes it helps to talk while you are doing something else like walking, throwing a ball, or riding in the car.

2 PROVIDE INFORMATION

Share the details you know and be honest about things that are still uncertain. Confirm that when school opens, things will look different, including health precautions, distancing and potential closures if the virus spreads. Let them know how important it is to also follow health guidelines outside of school. Openly discuss the difference between in-person and virtual school, and let them ask questions and share their views. Share about what is important to you as a parent and how you will be making decisions about their school plan. Offer to get more information on any questions you can't answer.

3 EXPLORE HOPES AND FEARS

Find out what your child is expecting and if they have joys, hopes or worries about going back to school. Ask open-ended questions so they don't feel obligated to confirm your ideas. (*What are you looking forward to the most?*) Ask what they think it will be like and what would help them to be ready. Validate their feelings and correct any misconceptions.

4 MAKE A PLAN TOGETHER

Decide on things you can do together to prepare for school. This might include practicing reading or math or making a list of questions for a new teacher. For teens, it might mean getting back to a more regular sleep schedule or thinking about the pros/cons of in-person vs. virtual learning. Help each child understand how you will make decisions about their school plan



SHOULD MY CHILD ATTEND THE TEMPORARY ONLINE PROGRAM?

LPS will provide a **temporary fully online school program** during the 2020-21 school year as an alternative to attending in-person. This is a separate virtual program that is not connected to the student's school of enrollment but supported by licensed teachers. This will be a different model than what was provided last spring during the emergency closures. There will be specific guidelines and time frames for when students can return to their home school. This program is open to any LPS student, but when considering this option, families should consider the social and emotional impact to their child, the student's desire and ability to do online learning, and the availability of adults to support the student at home.

WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER!

It is important for adults to help their children understand different perspectives and be respectful of others during this time. During a time of stress and turmoil, there are many opinions and each family will make tough decisions for their own reasons. We are stronger when we all work together to battle the virus and not each other.



LITTLETON
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OTHER RESOURCES FOR PARENTS

Centers for Disease Control COVID19 Resources
Colorado Dept. of Public Health & Environment COVID19 Site
Colorado Dept. of Education COVID19 Resources for Families
Children's Hospital COVID19 Resources for Families
Helping Children Cope - National Association of School Psychologists
Supporting Your Childs Mental Health as they Return to School - UNICEF

