

BACK-TO-SCHOOL BRAIN HEALTH CHECKLIST

HELP YOUR CHILD EASE INTO THE SCHOOL YEAR



A smoother school transition often begins before the first day. Use this checklist during the final one to two weeks of summer to gradually rebuild routines, reduce uncertainty, and help your child feel more prepared.

SLEEP AND EVENING ROUTINE

- ☐ Move bedtime earlier by 15 to 20 minutes every few days
- ☐ Adjust wake-up time gradually toward the school schedule
- ☐ Keep bedtime and wake-up times as consistent as possible
- ☐ Reduce screens during the final hour before bed
- ☐ Create a calming evening routine
- ☐ Prepare clothes, supplies, and backpacks the night before

MORNING ROUTINE

- ☐ Practice waking up at the school-year time
- ☐ Reintroduce a consistent breakfast routine
- ☐ Walk through the order of morning tasks
- ☐ Build in extra time to reduce rushing
- ☐ Create a simple visual or written schedule if helpful
- ☐ Practice leaving the house at the expected time

DAILY STRUCTURE

- ☐ Reestablish consistent meal and snack times
- ☐ Balance structured activities with downtime
- ☐ Add a regular reading or quiet learning period
- ☐ Use a calendar to count down to the first day
- ☐ Review upcoming appointments, activities, or schedule changes
- ☐ Avoid changing everything at once

A Reminder for Parents

The goal is not to create a perfect routine before school starts.

The goal is to make the transition feel more familiar and manageable. Some children adjust quickly. Others need more repetition, predictability, and recovery time.

Small, consistent steps can help the brain prepare for bigger changes.



EMOTIONAL PREPARATION

- ☐ Ask what your child is looking forward to
- ☐ Ask what feels uncertain or stressful
- ☐ Listen without immediately trying to solve every concern
- ☐ Talk through likely changes in teachers, classrooms, or routines
- ☐ Identify a trusted adult your child can approach at school
- ☐ Plan a calming strategy for difficult moments

SENSORY AND REGULATION SUPPORT

- ☐ Identify clothing, sounds, foods, or environments that may be challenging
- ☐ Pack familiar sensory or comfort items when appropriate
- ☐ Schedule quiet recovery time after school
- ☐ Practice calming routines before they are urgently needed
- ☐ Make sure your child has access to their communication supports
- ☐ Share useful regulation information with teachers or support staff

SCHOOL READINESS

- ☐ Confirm transportation and practice the route when possible
- ☐ Visit the school or review photos of the building
- ☐ Organize supplies in advance
- ☐ Review the school-day schedule together
- ☐ Prepare any medication, communication, or accommodation information
- ☐ Write down questions for teachers or school staff

WHEN ADDITIONAL SUPPORT MAY HELP

Consider seeking additional support if your child is experiencing ongoing difficulty with:

- Sleep
- Attention or focus
- Anxiety about returning to school
- Emotional regulation
- Sensory overwhelm
- Transitions
- Morning routines
- Recovery after stressful days

Brain Enhancement Center offers personalized, brain-based approaches designed to support regulation, attention, sleep, and overall brain function.

Schedule a consultation to learn more about how we may support your child and family this school year.