

BACK

TO

SCHOOL



— 2020 —



## How to label your child's school supplies

At school, children need to keep track of a multitude of supplies including binders, pencils, notebooks, erasers and more. All of these things need to be marked with their name, otherwise they could get lost or stolen. Here are two tools you can use to label school supplies.

### PERMANENT MARKERS

In most cases, fine-point permanent markers work best for identifying school supplies. They're great for writing directly on a wide range of surfaces and textiles. For wooden pencils, use a utility knife to scratch off the paint and expose the wood, which will take the marker's ink much better. For clothing, write names or initials on the care label. Always make sure to let the ink dry before using an item. Retouch as needed.

### ADHESIVE LABELS

Buy labels of different sizes. If you buy blank ones, you'll need to write your child's name on them before affixing them to an object. If you have a lot of things to label, or if your handwriting isn't as clear as you'd like, you can use a printer or label maker. For clothing, consider using iron-on labels or ones designed to stick to fabric.

Alternatively, you can buy special labels made for identifying school supplies. Consider shopping for labels with your child and getting them to choose a type they like.

Don't write your child's full name on the outside of their backpack or lunchbox. A stranger could approach them and gain their trust by using their name.



## Is your child ready for kindergarten?

If you're wondering whether or not your child is ready for kindergarten, here's what you should know.

### THE BASICS

Children should have certain physical, social and cognitive skills before starting kindergarten. For instance, they should be able to:

- Wait their turn
- Play and share with others
- Put on and remove their clothes
- Go up and down stairs
- Recognize a few letters from the alphabet
- Follow directions
- Hold a pencil
- Use the washroom

There are many ways you can foster the development of these skills. You can, for example, encourage them to form connections with other children their age, progressively let them get dressed on their own and encourage them to express their emotions in constructive and non-disruptive ways.

If you feel your child isn't quite ready when the time comes, ask the school to put you in contact with someone who can help, such as a psychologist or special educator. They'll be able to provide advice, evaluate your child's needs and devise a plan to address concerns.



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## 5 health-care professionals to see before school starts

To help ensure your child's academic success, it's important to identify any potential health problems that can negatively impact their progress. Here are five key health-care professionals your child should visit before the school year begins.

### 1. THE OPTOMETRIST

Often, kids don't report vision issues because they have no other frame of reference for what the world is supposed to look like, which is why eye exams are so important. Myopia, hyperopia, astigmatism and other eye issues could make it hard for them to see the board and follow along in class.

### 2. THE AUDIOLOGIST

If your child suffers from frequent ear infections, you should make an appointment with an audiologist. You should also visit one if you suspect your child has trouble hearing or if hearing issues run in your family.

### 3. THE PODIATRIST

Some types of foot problems develop as kids grow, and a visit to the podiatrist will help uncover them. Early detection and intervention are key, otherwise your child may develop irreversible issues that could prevent them from enjoying a full range of motion later in life.

### 4. THE DENTIST

Children should visit the dentist for a routine exam and cleaning at least twice a year. This is essential for their oral health and the early detection of problems that may require orthodontic intervention, such as misaligned teeth or an overbite.

### 5. THE PEDIATRICIAN

Finally, don't forget to visit your family doctor. They'll be able to assess your child's overall health and make sure their vaccinations are up to date.

Many health-care professionals tend to get busy in the fall, so be sure to make your appointments sooner rather than later.



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## 5 types of Thermos lunches

Isothermal containers, better known as Thermoses, allow kids to enjoy warm lunches at school. If you're unsure of what to pack in yours, here are some ideas.

- 1. Stew.** This iconic comfort food is versatile and hearty, making it an ideal choice for your kids' lunches. There are many types, from beef stew to vegetarian chili, so there's sure to be one that pleases your family.
- 2. Soup.** This lunch can be made ahead of time, reheated and then packed in a Thermos. Making soup is a great way to use vegetables that aren't as fresh as they could be. Note that thick, creamy soups tend to stay warmer than thinner ones.
- 3. Shepherd's pie.** This classic dish can be prepared in a variety of ways. Whatever recipe you follow, shepherd's pie is a healthy and hearty meal that's ideal for packing in a Thermos.
- 4. Pasta.** There are many types of pasta dishes from spaghetti and macaroni to tortellini and lasagna. Best of all, it's a lunch that's quick and easy to prepare — simply cook it and combine with your choice of sauce or pesto. To make it easier and less messy to eat, cut long pasta into smaller pieces before putting it in a Thermos.
- 5. Pulled pork.** Accompanied with veggies, rice or potatoes, this dish is sure to make a few of your children's friends jealous.

Before filling the Thermos, make sure to warm it up with boiling water. Also, when you pack the food it should be as hot as possible. Otherwise, it may no longer be safe to eat come lunch-time.



## 4 ways to ease back-to-school jitters

If you have children who are starting school soon, they're probably a bit nervous. Here are four tips to ease their worries.

- 1. ADDRESS THEIR CONCERNS**  
Don't shy away from the subject. Tell children what to expect and be sure to highlight the positives of going to school, such as making new friends. Above all, encourage them to come to you with any questions.
- 2. MAKE SURE THEY'RE PREPARED**  
The school will send you a list of supplies your child is going to need throughout the year. Avoid waiting until the last minute to purchase items. Even if you don't think your child will use them right away, it'll be easier if they have everything they need ahead of time.
- 3. PROJECT CALM AND CONFIDENCE**  
On the first day of school, it's imperative to not let your nervousness show. If you're worried, your child will likely pick up on it and start worrying too. Smile and try to remain upbeat.

**4. DON'T BE OVERPROTECTIVE**  
Remember that your children will have to socialize with their classmates by themselves, so make sure you don't hover. That said, don't just leave as soon as their back is turned. Notify your children before you leave, but avoid drawing out the goodbyes.

When your kids get home from school, make sure to have a snack prepared and be ready to discuss their first day.



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## What should you do if your child has behavioural problems?

Is your child failing to respect class rules or acting in a disruptive or violent way? If so, you may not know what to do. Here's how you can find a solution to this type of problem.

### UNCOVER THE SOURCE

If your child is acting in an inappropriate manner, it's important to understand why. Try to determine if the behavioural issue is occurring only at school or if it's happening at home too. Understanding when and where the behaviour is exhibited could provide insight into the situation.

Children may act out for a variety of reasons. In some cases, it's because their social needs aren't being met. In others, it's that the child finds the learning objectives difficult to meet. Tensions at home can also make it difficult for children to manage their emotions. Alternatively, bullying may be the culprit.

### WORK WITH SPECIALISTS

The right professional can help root out the cause of your child's behavioural issues. This includes:

- Audiologists
- Special educators
- Doctors
- Optometrists
- Speech and language therapists
- Psychoeducators

### • Psychologists

These experts are especially helpful if your child's issues are linked to mental health problems, learning impediments, vision problems or dyslexia. Health-care workers and trained educators can provide your child with a treatment plan. With professional help and a bit of effort, you're likely to see an improvement.



## How to encourage kids to keep learning

It's normal for children to be a little rusty when they head back to school. If you'd like to help them get ready beforehand, here are some ideas.

• **Get them to read.** This can include novels, comic books, magazines and non-fiction books.

• **Do math on the fly.** Encourage kids to add, subtract, multiply and solve other equations throughout the day. They can do this while you prepare dinner, go for a walk or wait in line at the grocery store.

• **Create a vacation album.** Put together a collection of pictures taken during the summer and get your child to write short descriptions under each one.

• **Practise another language.** Watch movies or television shows in their second language.

There are many ways to encourage children to keep learning, and even a small amount of time engaged in educational activities can motivate them.



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