

how to help a child with school stress

For some students, going back to school can feel like a rollercoaster. That's why it's so important to check in with them regularly and offer meaningful guidance when they're feeling overwhelmed. Use this quick guide to help support them as they navigate their feelings this school year.

Potential Stressors

Bullying

School environments are often where bullying may occur, so it's important to look for and recognize the signs that a child is being bullied. These include avoiding friends or social situations, dropping grades, decreased self-esteem, changes in sleeping or eating habits, or skipping school. [Learn more.](#)

Homesickness

When children move to a new home or school, like going from elementary to middle school, they may feel anxious, stressed, or sad. This can affect sleep, appetite, focus, or cause social worries. Helping them feel comfortable, building new routines, and watching for changes in behavior can ease homesickness.

Body image

Having a healthy body image can be impacted by bullying, social media, social stigmas, and the influence of friends or family. A negative self-image can lead to other struggles such as depression and [eating disorders](#). Watch out for signs such as constantly comparing oneself to others, excessively looking at themselves, or avoiding viewing themselves entirely. It's important to reinforce a positive body image and seek professional help if needed.

School refusal

When stress becomes too overwhelming for a child, [school refusal](#)— an intense feeling of anxiety or fear that causes absolute refusal to go to school— can materialize for various reasons. Anxiety over being in a new school, insecurities, bullying, or the loss of a loved one or pet may contribute to this issue. [Learn more.](#)

Bad grades

Poor or falling grades may be a sign of mental health challenges and can be a stressful situation for both the student and parent. It's important for parents to respond with patience and empathy and work with both their child and teachers to understand the root causes for poor grades. Provide the proper course of action such as tutoring sessions, extra time for homework and working with school counselors.

how to help a child with school stress

For some students, going back to school can feel like a rollercoaster. That's why it's so important to check in with them regularly and offer meaningful guidance when they're feeling overwhelmed. Use this quick guide to help support them as they navigate their feelings this school year.

What to do

- ✓ Check in regularly to see how they're feeling.
- ✓ Listen first and with empathy and aim for full understanding.
- ✓ Reassure and validate however they are feeling.
- ✓ Help them identify triggers and root causes of stress.
- ✓ Look for signs of stress and anxiety such as changes in behavior, trouble sleeping, inability to concentrate, or excessive school absence.
- ✓ Seek additional help, resources and tips by texting **SCHOOL** to **741741** to connect with a volunteer Crisis Counselor. Free, 24/7, confidential.



Add contact

What NOT to do

- ✗ Force confrontation and conversations.
- ✗ Communicate and offer support through lecturing.
- ✗ Try to relate by sharing your own story about a similar feeling or situation.
- ✗ Suggest solutions or advice if you're not well-informed about the issue.
- ✗ Expect an immediate change in their behavior while they're experiencing stress or anxiety.
- ✗ Get frustrated, angry, or show disappointment when they're going through a difficult moment.



Learn more