

How to Support Your Child During Back to School Season

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Eating disorders are complex, bio-psycho-social illnesses and any kind of transition is challenging for those affected by eating disorders. Back to school season is a time of change for students going back to school, transitioning from one grade to the next, from middle school to high school, and from high school to college. Since routines, expectations, and academics change, the needs of the students' who are experiencing an eating disorder may also change. It's important for parents to be mindful of the unique stressors that their children may be experiencing during this time and make adjustments accordingly.

Tips

The following tips may be helpful as you are navigating through this transition.

- Have an open conversation with your child about how they would like to be supported, what support means for them during this transition time.
- Know and watch for the warning signs of disordered eating. If you notice your children engaging in disordered eating, express your concerns and ask how you can support them.
- Help your child establish a support system by encouraging them to reach out to teachers/school counselors/support staff who can support them while they maintain recovery.
- Be mindful of your own expectations for your child's academic performance and keep in mind that students with eating disorders also struggle with perfectionism.
- Ask for help. If your child is already in treatment, communicate with your child's treatment team. If you notice disordered eating signs for the first time, contact a professional who specializes in eating disorders immediately.

For more information and resources on eating disorders, visit nationaleatingdisorders.org.

