

# Back to School Tips For Older Students

*Depending on your child's school setting and abilities, you can individualize our suggestions to make them a good fit for the student during the back to school process.*

**Work with them to organize their bedroom.** Separate ongoing projects, finished work, and school supplies into labeled bins, folders, file cabinets, or an under-bed box. Provide a shelf for books and a bulletin board for reminders.

Help your teen select a "cool" first day outfit ahead of time. **First impressions** are important to peers at this age.

**Post reminders.** Give your child a pad of sticky notes, and encourage him/her to post special reminders on mirrors, doors and elsewhere.

Get a **daily planner** to keep track of deadlines, appointments, events and so on. Encourage your child to keep a daily to-do list, and teach him/her to prioritize by dividing tasks into two groups: IMPORTANT (do it now!) and LESS IMPORTANT (do it later). Go over the next day's schedule together every night.

**Prepare for the next day.** As your child packs his/her backpack each evening, make sure, make sure that homework is in its folder and that everything he or she will need - sneakers, lunch money, permission slips - is all ready to go.

Reserve a shelf or **cabinet by the front door** for items that your child takes to school every day. Label it with colored stickers, so that glasses, wallet and bus pass can easily be found. Hang a hook underneath for a backpack or sports bag.

Buy a **backpack** that encourages organization, such as a backpack with multiple compartments. Visit [www.autismspeaks.org/docs/family\\_services\\_docs/BackpackOrganizer.pdf](http://www.autismspeaks.org/docs/family_services_docs/BackpackOrganizer.pdf) for a backpack checklist.

Keep an **extra set of textbooks at home.** That way, your child won't have to remember every book every day. Make the extra books part of the IEP, or request them from the teacher at the beginning of the term.

Structure time on the weekends for review. Many students panic on Sunday evening because they didn't accomplish everything they should have. **Creating a weekend routine** with scheduled free time and study time can help prevent a meltdown. On weekends, help your child go through his/her backpack to remove old work and see if he/she needs any new supplies for the week.

[Autism Speaks School Community Tool Kit](#)

[www.autismspeaks.org/community/family\\_services/school\\_kit.php](http://www.autismspeaks.org/community/family_services/school_kit.php)