



# SUCCESSFUL TRANSITIONS TIPS

*Supporting a successful transition back to school from the holidays for students with ASD*



1. Try to keep sleeping patterns to the same routine as possible during the holiday break. Especially returning to typical bedtime hours at least 3 days prior to the start of school. Regardless of the age of your child/youth.
2. Remember to create a bedtime routine that includes quiet calming activities like bathing, reading a book, and mindful activities before bed. Reduce screen time at least 2 hours beforehand if possible.
3. Use a [calendar](#) to mark the return to school so your child/youth can predict how their schedule will change in the coming days.
4. After the holidays, your house may change again when you put decorations away. This may be another difficult change, especially if some of your decorations include preferred characters or items. Consider leaving those up till near the end of the holiday and include your child/youth in taking things down and where they can put them.
5. You may want to consider introducing a [visual schedule](#) of the day, if you haven't been using one over the holidays to help your child/youth be more aware of what they will be doing each day, eventually adding in some learning activities in preparation of school starting.
6. Talk about your child/youth's school, teachers and peers. Drive by the school and talk about it. Show pictures of them if you have them, refamiliarizing your child/youth with people and places they will be going back to.
7. If your child/youth has gotten a new toy or is interested in a new character or game, be sure to share this information with your child/youth's teachers. Knowing your child/youth's new interests or preferences are very helpful and can be used to incorporate them in learning activities and pair with peers.
8. If you have time, consider a short journal entry you can do with your child/youth over the holidays in words or pictures that you can share with their teacher with information on what they did over the break.
9. A few days in advance of the start of school, start to plan what your child/youth will need to have ready the morning of the first day back. Prepack their knapsack, having them participate in what will go inside. Pick a location in your home close to the doorway where it can be placed and kept each day. Consider including this in their visual schedule.
10. A [social story](#) about returning to school, highlighting what your child/youth enjoys at school and identifying strategies they use as a reminder of what to do when feeling overwhelmed, may be helpful to have on hand and review a few days in advance of school.

