

Soothing Back-to-School Anxiety

by Nicole Duelli, Hp, CCH, RSHom(NA)

Practically every second child in B.C. is anxious about going back to school, according to a recent Angus Reid survey, so chances are you'll need some quick, easy tips to smooth the transition.

It's normal

Reminding yourself and your kids that back-to-school jitters are normal helps you—and your kids—feel better. The fact that 47 percent of all B.C. kids experience some anxiety about getting back into the groove of everyday life at school is proof. The main reasons cited were new teachers and new schedules.

Start the routine early

Most families will have slipped up on bedtime routines due to summer fun, so get back into reading fairy tales before bed, sneaking in an early bath, brewing a warm chamomile tea and whatever else works for your family—and it better not be TV or video games! Getting back into the routine well before school starts provides a feeling of comfort and prevents exhaustion in that first week of school.

Take some of the "newness" out

Make a trip out to school before school actually starts. Let the kids play in the playground, wander the halls,

and even talk to the teachers if they can. Including the kids in their back-to-school shopping, allowing them to choose a few (healthy) treats in their recess snacks and make lunch choices brings the routine back in a fun way and gets them prepared.

It's OK to be scared

Parents often feel uncomfortable when their children are hurting or worried, and rightly so. As a parent, it's our job to protect them from harm. But we have to be OK with our kids experiencing fears with the knowledge that overcoming them builds confidence. Talking about fears and anxieties allows children to cope better, even when we can't fix it for them. Just being a conduit for your children to express themselves regularly is crucial, not only for their mental health now, but to maintain that bond should they need help when they're older and the problems are bigger. If your child doesn't like to share, it may work to share a story of your own—do you remember a tough situation when you were the same age?

Be happy and give love

If we can be relaxed and happy in the last few days of their holidays, then our kids are more likely to be that way, too. As much as possible, take it easy, enjoy life and give them lots of love (not toys, not chocolates, just love). Love provides comfort and resilience to stress.



When all else fails

There are homeopathic medicines for anxiety, but they are not recommended on a regular basis for life's ups and downs. Rather, use them when emotions get extreme and you'll find homeopathy can help work wonders.

Give **Gelsemium 30c** if your child is feeling so anxious that she feels weak or spaced out or gets sick. This is the first-choice remedy for anticipatory anxiety.

Choose **Argentum nitricum 30c** instead if your child feels wired or jittery. Give three to five pills on the tongue once or

twice daily for a few days before school, or just use it as needed when feeling anxious. If the problem persists or recurs, seek the assistance of a homeopath to help resolve these more completely.

The first day of school, there is no guarantee you'll have a glitch-free morning, and that's part of the fun of parenting. Nonetheless, these tips will certainly help ease that transition. ●

Nicole Duelli, Hp, CCH, RSHom (NA), has been practicing classical homeopathy for 19 years and trained in naturopathic medicine in Germany. She believes homeopathy is the perfect complementary medicine because it rejuvenates the body's natural ability to heal without side-effects. She enjoys teaching, writing articles and occasionally blogging. www.vancouver-homeopath.com

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not. Forgiveness is our heart's greatest generosity.

At a better emotional state with each other, you can gently revisit what hurt you and be open to asking what hurt them. This is an ideal state. To give someone the time to clarify to you takes a generous spirit, and, when this happens, it is reciprocal—your sacred other will automatically be more open to you. This state comes when you are ready to move on to the next level.

It is much easier to not hurt, to not make the effort, because

sometimes overcoming hurts or working with someone you love requires all of you. But "hope" for a luminous love requires brave hearts and renewed commitments every day, every awakened moment. There is no second best. We are all warriors journeying for our best life with each other and we are, ultimately and intrinsically, worth it. ●

Trish Lim-O'Donnell, CCP, is a relationship coach and spiritual guide, ISMT teacher and E.Q. Music recording artist with 28 years of personal and professional life-coaching experience. www.trishlimodonnell.com