

14 Oct 2021

Media release

A psychologist's advice for a smooth sail back to school

With NSW students returning to school this week after a very long three months away, the Australian Association of Psychologists (AAPi) has provided some advice on ways to make the transition easier.

Here are some simple steps parents can take.

1. Try to be patient - with your child and yourself!
2. Create a sense of calm around your children.
3. Gently ease them back into the school routine, especially with younger children. Encourage them to try on their uniform, go to bed and wake up at their usual school times, talk to younger children about school lunches.
4. In the short term, put less focus on academic results.
5. Trust your school's teachers, counsellors and psychologists, who are all there to help your kids ease back into things.
6. Expect some nerves, tears and anxiety. It's natural.
7. Talk to your children about their feelings.
8. If you are anxious/struggling as a parent, reach out to your school for help, bearing in mind with everyone having a similar experience, the school staff might be very busy.

AAPi Executive Director Tegan Carrison said its members would like to see a greater number of psychologists in schools, given the ongoing impact of the pandemic on children's mental health.

"Following the release of the National Children's Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy last week, we would love to see one school psychologist/counsellor for every 500 students. Currently the rate is about 750:1 in NSW," she said.

About Australian Association of Psychologists Inc (AAPi)

The AAPi is a not-for-profit peak body for psychologists that aims to preserve the rich diversity of psychological practice in Australia. Formed in 2010 by a group of passionate grassroots psychologists, the AAPi's primary goal is to address inequality in the profession and represent all psychologists and their clients equally to government and funding bodies. Its primary mission is to lobby for equitable access for the Australian public to professional psychological services funded under the current Medicare Better Access Scheme.