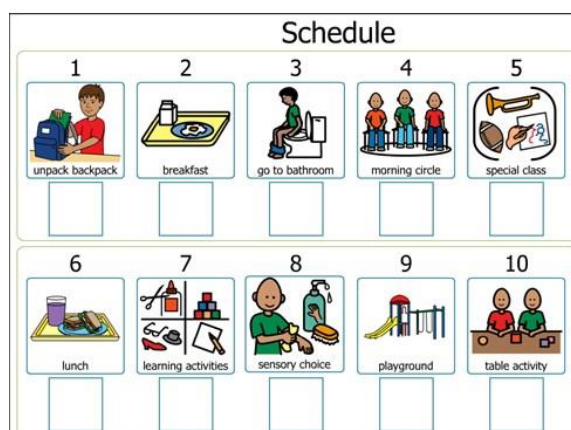


Transitioning back into the classroom from learning from home

- **A social story**- your teacher or key worker/therapist can help with this
 - this is a short story written from the child's point of view about a new situation
 - it is used to help them prepare and understand what to expect when going back to the classroom
 - it is useful for teaching skills in situations that otherwise might be confusing or difficult
 - it helps to reduce anxiety in a safe, positive and supportive way
- **A visual schedule/calendar**
 - a visual schedule of the day consists of pictures that show a clear timetable for how the day will look
 - a visual schedule of the week helps them know which days they go to school and which they stay home. Colour coding weekends and school days and keep it in an easily seen place so that the child can mark off the days or count the sleeps before school/kinder starts
 - these pictures can include photos of their teacher, school or classroom- you can even do a drive by of the school to help them remember what the buildings/ playground etc look like
 - ensure you are using visuals that are meaningful for your child. Some children understand line drawings but others need photos of the real object to understand them. If in doubt ask your teacher or key worker/therapist for assistance



- **A video call** or **phone call** from their teacher inviting them back and explaining how the day will work can be helpful to making them feel welcome and comfortable again in that space
- It's important to talk about **what is staying the same**. Some examples may be:
 - Friends
 - Teacher
 - Classroom

- **Any changes** are clearly explained (a social story is useful):
 - if your child is starting off with reduced hours it is important that child is really clear about when they will be at school and not (the weekly visual schedule can assist with this)
 - if your child will have their temperature taken
 - if your child will have separate play times to other classes, if kids have to sit further apart
 - if your child's classes will be combined or if your child will be in a different classroom
 - which teachers or aide will be in their room
 - if parents have to drop off/pick up in a different spot
 - if some play areas are off limits

as much information as possible to explain

- Start to **structure your school days at home** similar to the school structure:
 - Have your child practice getting dressed for school and packing their bag/lunch box in the mornings- you can aim to have this accomplished for the 'normal' time you would be leaving for school so they don't feel rushed when they do go to school
 - having a recess and lunch just like the school times
 - wear the uniform

- **Explain that it's safe and talk as a family**
 - every day will bring new emotions, feelings, wins and challenges. What works one day may not work the next.
 - there may be "big feelings" for you and for your child! Discussing these feelings as a family allow your child to see that they aren't alone in having these feelings and that we are all there to help each other.
 - transition can take time, give your child lots of time and warning before heading back to the classroom to understand and prepare themselves for this change

Be kind to yourself- there are people here to support you. Remember- talk to your teachers and your therapists, we are all in this together!