

BACK TO SCHOOL

Tips for
working
parents

SEPTEMBER

It's that time of year when our children go back to school and the juggling act of being a working parent can be at its most challenging. Here are a few tips that can hopefully make the transition a little easier...

SCHEDULE

Get organised with a weekly schedule / calendar and involve all members of the household in this so they know what to expect in the week ahead.

PLAN

Make life easier by planning meals ahead, doing grocery shopping online and where possible, meal prepping in advance.

ROUTINE

Develop a routine chart so everyone knows what needs to be done the night before, the morning of, and after school. Share out these tasks among all members of the household - even the younger ones can help out in a small way!

DELEGATE

Reassess your child's independence to see if their responsibilities can be increased from the previous school year, e.g. can they now walk / cycle to school independently, pack their own schoolbag, make their own packed lunch, etc.

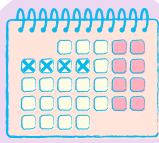
PREPARE

Get the day off to a good start. Prepare the night before by ensuring lunches are made, school bags packed, clothes organised, etc. Avoid rushing around by giving yourself plenty of time in the morning. Think how much time you'll need and add an extra 10 / 15 minutes to allow for some wiggle room.

PRACTICE

If you can, carry out a 'practice run' of the morning / evening routine. A run-through like this can reveal potential snags and give you a chance to iron out any issues ahead of time.





Explore different leave types that are available to you as a working parent, e.g.

- Shorter Working Year
- Work Share
- Parental Leave
- Force Majeure
- Unpaid Special Leave
- Parents Leave, etc.

Details can be found at [Leave - hr.per.gov.ie](http://Leave-hr.per.gov.ie)



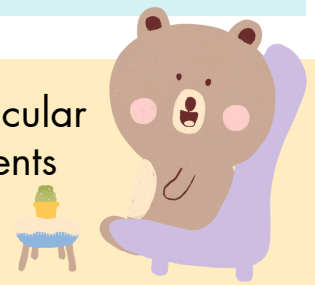
Let your line manager know if you need flexibility with school drop-offs and collections, particularly in those first few weeks when school hours are sometimes staggered for those starting Pre-School or Junior Infants.



Where possible, develop backup plans for unforeseen circumstances that may crop up, e.g. your child is sick or you get delayed in traffic etc.

Where you have limited support, please speak with your line manager, child's school or afterschool provider about your individual situation.

Don't put pressure on yourself to commit to lots of extra-curricular activities outside of school / work hours. Down-time for parents and children is just as important!



Practice self-care by making room in your week to do things that fill your tank rather than drain it. Designate and protect certain times of the week that are just for you.



It can be helpful and reassuring to speak with others in a similar situation and share in each others' experiences of being a working parent.

Adjusting to a new routine can be difficult and tiring, especially in the early days of establishing it.

Take it easy on yourself and remember...

YOU ARE DOING YOUR BEST!

Seirbhís Chúnaimh
d'Fhostaithe na Státseirbhíse



For further support reach out to the [CSEAS](#) or take a look at our [parenting page](#) on the CSEAS website.