

# The Parent's Corner

we're in your corner

As we wrap up our final weeks of this unique school year, students enter summer break with a chance to relax and possibly enjoy family vacations and reunions. For many students, the end of the school year is just a short break away from their school friends and teachers. For others, the end of this school year represents a life milestone (graduation from high school, 8th graders moving on from the private or parochial school they've attended since Pre-K). It also may mean your child saying goodbye to their current school due to a family move or school switch. These transitions are often out of a student's control. Parents may experience job changes and new opportunities, families outgrow homes or move closer to relatives, or you may have social or academic concerns at your child's current placement. Moving to a new school or home is often met with a multitude of emotions from students, ranging from excitement and hopefulness to anxiety, resentment toward parents or dread. Sometimes, these emotions hit all at once and are hard for both students and parents to navigate.

Here are some tips to assisting your children in working through the adjustment phase:

- **Give Them a Voice.** Whether your child is in 1st grade or a high school sophomore, they will likely have questions and opinions regarding your school or home move. Resentment sometimes forms towards parents when children feel their voices are not being heard regarding where they will live, what school they will attend or who they will have to move away from. Try to give your child a voice on as many decisions as you can. While they likely will not have a say in *everything*, you can still find ways to empower them by letting them design a new bedroom, make school choices, or sign up for activities in the community they are interested in.
- **Allow Them to Stay Connected.** Kids make connections with peers during school years that become incredibly important to them. If your child's concern is leaving behind friends and neighbors, have a discussion about ways you can keep this connection despite the distance. Planning FaceTimes, dates for meet-ups/visits, invitations to events such as birthday parties, or creating an address book for young students to keep track of friends' information may help bridge this social gap.
- **Prepare Them.** Sit down with your child and walk them through an online tour of the home you will be moving to or their new school's website. You may even choose to go to the GreatSchools website for reviews on public/private schools to look over with your student or schedule a tour/orientation. A school principal or counselor may be happy to do this to help your child get acquainted. Older students who will be changing classrooms may find a tour especially helpful in combatting first-day jitters. After all, nothing triggers anxiety like worrying you will walk into the wrong class on the first day!
- **Be Empathetic, But Encourage Resilience.** Life transitions can be difficult for even adults, so remind yourself that your child's brain is still developing until their mid-20s, as is their ability to sort through powerful emotions. Providing a listening ear and accepting the range of emotions they may be experiencing can go a long way in your relationship with your child, while also reminding them that adjustments do not last forever and of past times they have faced change with resilience. This past school year is a really good example of that!

**As always, we are in your corner if you need extra support!  
Wishing you a good and healthy summer!**