



Back to School Guide



**Creating a
successful start
to the new
school year for
students with
Down syndrome**

Preparing Your Child



- Use social stories or picture booklets to help your child become familiar with the school building and staff. Consider taking a trip to tour the school to become familiar with it.
- Discuss school positively and enthusiastically, expressing excitement about the upcoming year.
- For younger children, read picture books about starting school together. Using a calendar to mark off the days so they can see when they are returning to school can be helpful.
- Allow your child to make choices about their outfit, such as selecting their school bag, shoes, and clothing. If they wear a uniform, laying out their clothes can help build excitement about going to school.

Social Stories

- Social stories are short narratives that can help your child visualize, prepare for, and navigate situations and feelings.
- Here are some examples of social stories that you can use:

Pre-School

Kindergarten

Going to a new school

Back to School

Middle School

Lunch Time

Additional Stories





club 21™

All About Me

- Consider making an “All About Me” page to share with classmates and teachers. This can help familiarize them with Down syndrome and your child and their needs.
- An “All About Me” page should include your child’s strengths as well as needs and strategies for addressing those needs. Include information that your child may want them to know that they may not be able to communicate.
- See example here: [All About Me](#)



Templates

[For Teachers](#)

[For Students](#)

[For Students](#)

[For Anybody](#)

[Additional Templates](#)



Before School Starts

- Make doctor and dental appointments; check vision and hearing.
- If medication is needed, a doctor's note will be needed to give to the school.
- Consider your vision for your child's future and what you hope they will achieve during the school year. Share these goals with their support network to ensure everyone can work together to help them succeed.
- Review your child's IEP and make a copy. Request a meeting if any changes are needed.
- Create a contact list of important people and updated information to give to the school.
- Create morning and evening routines that prepare you for the school day.
- Adjust meal schedule to mimic the schedule at school
- Create a homework area at home
- Create a lunchbox list of items your child is likely to eat at school to make meal preparation easier.
- Create a weekly schedule with school requirements and extracurricular activities.
- Purchase needed school clothes and supplies.
- Complete any forms needed for the school.
- Label all items of clothing and shoes with your child's name.





Kickstarting The School Year

- Introduce yourself to any new teachers, classroom aides, or other educators you don't know.
- Give any medications needed during the day to the school.
Give out your "All About Me" page.
- Joining a school sport or extracurricular activity is a great way to stay active while also socializing with your peers.
- Schedule playdates with familiar and new friends after school or on weekends.
- Most importantly, relax and make time for yourself.

