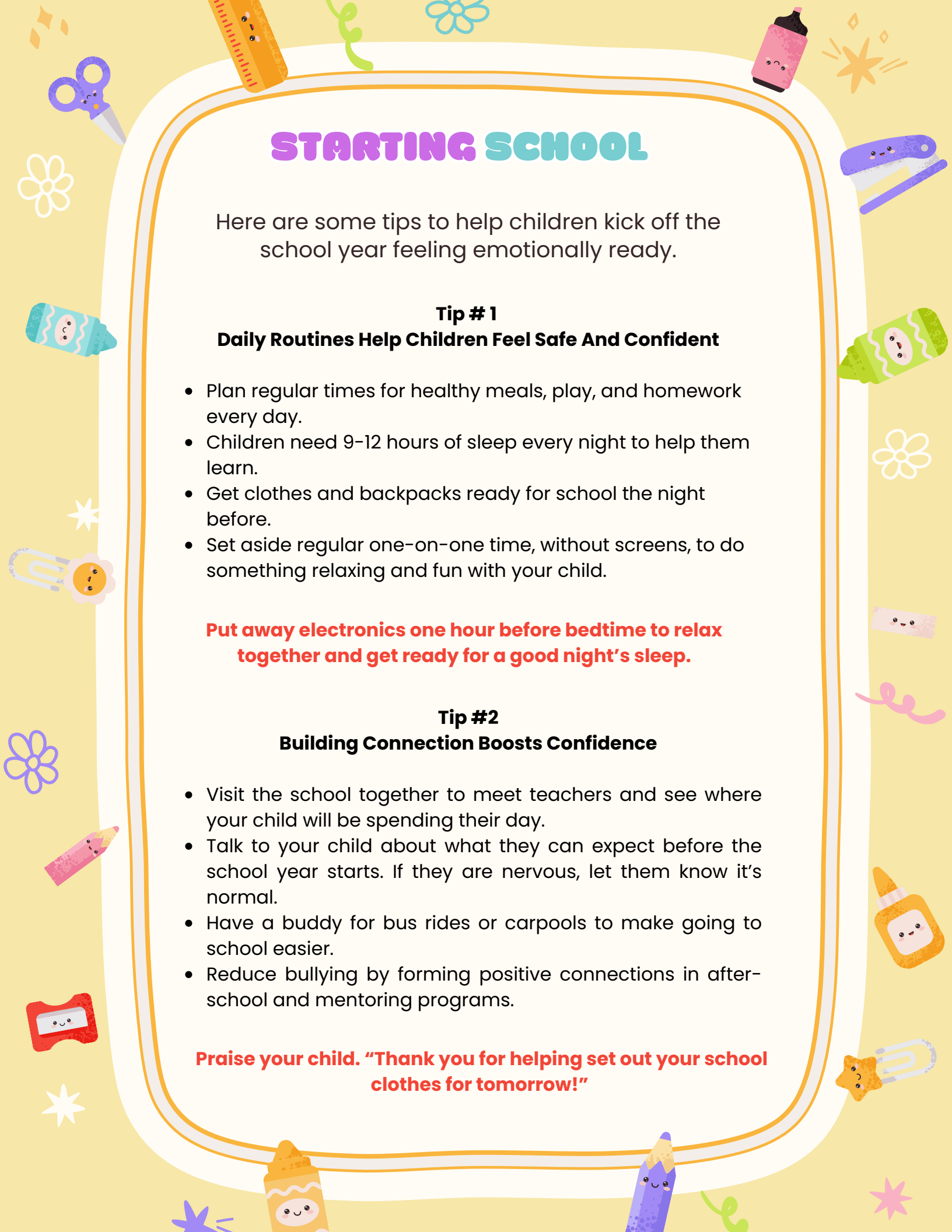




STARTING SCHOOL

Here are some tips to help children kick off the school year feeling emotionally ready.

Tip # 1

Daily Routines Help Children Feel Safe And Confident

- Plan regular times for healthy meals, play, and homework every day.
- Children need 9-12 hours of sleep every night to help them learn.
- Get clothes and backpacks ready for school the night before.
- Set aside regular one-on-one time, without screens, to do something relaxing and fun with your child.

Put away electronics one hour before bedtime to relax together and get ready for a good night's sleep.

Tip #2

Building Connection Boosts Confidence

- Visit the school together to meet teachers and see where your child will be spending their day.
- Talk to your child about what they can expect before the school year starts. If they are nervous, let them know it's normal.
- Have a buddy for bus rides or carpools to make going to school easier.
- Reduce bullying by forming positive connections in after-school and mentoring programs.

Praise your child. "Thank you for helping set out your school clothes for tomorrow!"



Tip #3

Talking About Their Feelings Builds Trust

- Ask your child: what was the best thing about your school day?
- Acknowledge their feelings, even when emotions are tough because of conflict or disappointment.
- Practice coping skills such as belly breathing.

Talk about their feelings “It’s okay to feel...” & “I’m so glad you told me about...”

Tip #4

You Know Your Child Best. If You Think Your Child Needs More Help:

- Talk to your child’s teachers about how you can support their needs at school.
- If your child’s feelings are affecting their sleep or school, talk to school health staff or their doctor about ways to help.
- Consider a health check-up to stay up to date on your child’s routine health care.

Try belly breathing together! Put both hands on your belly, breathe in slowly through your nose, then breathe out slowly through your mouth.

Books to Read

- Tomorrow is the First Day of School: A Children's Picture Book About New Beginnings and Learning written by Ernest Dugo
- Topsy And Tim Start School written by Jean Adamson
- I Am Too Absolutely Small for School written by Lauren Child

Preparing School Lunches

Tip # 1: Plan ahead

- Planning saves time and stress. Take a few minutes before you go food shopping to list out the week's lunches.
- Better yet, get children involved in making some decisions, like which fruit to pack.

Tip # 2: Involve children

- Getting children to help with choosing and preparing lunches increases the odds that they will eat and enjoy their food. It also teaches them valuable life skills!

Tip #3: Keep it simple and balanced

- Many children don't mind having the same type of lunch most days, so no need to overcomplicate it!
- A balanced lunch includes protein foods, whole grains, and fruits and vegetables.
- You can add variety by packing different types of fruit, alternating between whole grain bread and wraps, or adding in tasty additions like whole grain banana muffins.

