



Kids Back to School by Dolores

Back to school can become a little challenging for you, your family and most importantly your child with that in mind I have a few tips for you.

Stay Calm

If you want your child to be calm – *You Need To Stay Calm*. Easier said than done, especially if your child is in a bad mood some mornings. If I panic – David panics, if I'm in a hurry and ask him to hurry up, it upsets him and can make him do the opposite. On that note don't expect your child to do things as fast or the same as their siblings. Take extra time in the morning so you both can start the day well.

School Uniform

Your child's uniform can pose a challenge depending on your child's ability but maybe a few adjustments might make a difference. I always changed the waistband of David's trousers to elastic so it was much easier for him to use, especially when he needed to go to the bathroom. Thank God for Velcro as this can make life a little bit easier for everyone and give your child a feeling of more independence.

I always hear other parents buying uniforms that their child would grow into but I could never do this because of the danger of tripping up David.

School Lunches

I know some schools have a healthy eating plan and your child may be extra fussy, but there is nothing you can do about it and try your best to work around it. I had this in David's school and when I heard it, I nearly cried because at the time his eating habits were horrendous.

I was worried sick over him as he would not touch a piece of fruit, veg, meat, pasta or water. Of course, I made sure he had a big breakfast and had something in the car for him when he came out.

But would you believe it after a few weeks he started eating the other children's lunches and the SNA would tell me what he had so I could start adding a little something into his lunch box each week. It was great as his eating habits improved from peer pressure and at the end, I would encourage David to pack it himself the night before.

New teacher and SNA

You should, of course, have met with the new teacher and SNA before the school year as it's not a good idea to go up to the new teacher (only to introduce yourself) on the first morning as he/she will be extremely busy.

Have a good chat with the teacher around homework and expectation. I remember spending so much time completing David homework and the only person I was fooling was myself. If your child can't do it and has tried maybe it is just not comprehensible for him/her to do. Write it in the school journal and explain to the SNA or teacher.

Also, put notes in the school journal if your child is coming down with a cold, had a seizure during the night, not in a good mood, etc. It just makes it easier for SNA to know what is going on.

Participation

The dreaded subject for most parents and ensuring your child is not accidentally isolated is always a worry. I always found that explain to the teacher and SNA ways that David could be include was always the best solution.

Ok so David may not have been able to play on a sports field but he could blow the whistle when a score was made or hold the rope with someone ran over the finish line or even help with a pep talk or give water out at half time.

There are loads to do and a little reasonability for your child will make her/him feel very important and included. Don't expect others to come up with a solution, just nicely give a few ideas.

Finally

We do not know what it's like to have a disability and we haven't walked in our child's shoes. We don't know what is going on in their head and I feel we should be very proud of all our children for going to school whether it's mainstream or a special needs school.

Our children are great to be able to get up and go with so many different conditions they have and I know I am very proud of all the children I meet in my life.