



4 Healthy Habits to Help Kids Fall Back into Routine

There's no denying that 2020 has been a year like no other. The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way Alberta kids live – the way they learn, play, and interact. In many households, our day-to-day routines have shifted dramatically – in others, they've disappeared altogether. Lots of screen time? Check. Extra-late bedtime? Check. Too much time lounging around? Check.

Back-to-school season might look and feel a little different this year, but a healthy fall routine can help bring order, predictability, and a stable rhythm to our 'new normal.' When your kids know what to expect, their sense of security and their confidence both improve. They feel calm and capable, and often have better behaviour.

Healthy Children

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So how can you help your child get back into a healthy groove this fall?

- **Catch some Zs.** Establish a bed and wake-time and then stick to it! Aim to stay as close to it as possible, even on weekends. The amount of sleep your child gets can affect their mood, behavior, ability to process information and school performance.
- **Make physical activity a priority for the entire family.** This will influence how your child views the importance of physical activity. With the disruption of some organized sports, having the opportunity to get active at home might be exactly what your child needs.
- **Put mealtimes on your daily roster.** Regularly scheduled healthy meals and snacks helps keep you and your child fueled for the day. The predictability around mealtimes might be something your child craves especially if they are adjusting to new norms.

- **Check-in.** Make a point of asking your child how they are doing every day. Ask open-ended questions and show them you are interested in what they are saying by putting away any distractions.

Going back to school can be exciting and challenging for children. Supporting them with a healthy back to school routine will help them make a smooth transition.

Students across Alberta are returning to classrooms for the 2020/21 school year. For more information about school re-entry and the new health measures at school visit: alberta.ca/returntoschool