

Transitioning Back to School

**It's a New Normal
for Us All**

**Updated on
2 Jun 2020**



Ministry of Education
SINGAPORE

Parent Kit

PART

06

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“How do I cope with the ‘new normal’ after the Circuit Breaker?
What do I need to do to prepare for it?”

Have you been asking yourself these questions?

When school starts in Term 3, your children will be moving into a new normal. The wearing of masks, not seeing some of their juniors/seniors when in school, having to maintain a safe distance from their classmates and other safe management measures will become some of the new routines for your children.

Your children will be transitioning into the new normal with both excitement and anxieties. We’ve pulled together a few tips to support you in guiding your child to take on the new normal.

Don’t worry, be steady!



Find the answers to your questions

- As parents, you may have some concerns as we approach the new school term. Your emotions affect your children.
- Before attending to your children, attend to yourself first through a better understanding and reassurance of the new normal for your children.
- Here are a few sources of information:
 - [This video](#) illustrates the safe management measures that will be put in place in schools
 - Minister of Education, Mr Ong Ye Kung addresses top concerns on Back to School arrangements [here](#)
 - [MOE FAQs page](#)



Have a “Debrief” with your children to bring closure to the Circuit Breaker experience

- **The fluidity of the COVID-19 situation has brought about many changes to our lives for the past 2 months with different experiences and responses to the situation.**
- **Revisit this journey with your children and have a conversation with them about their experiences. You can also share about your experiences. You can talk about:**
 - What changes did they have to adapt to?
 - What feelings did they experience? Why?
 - What they are grateful for?
 - What as a family, should you be grateful for? Why?
 - What are the new things they have learnt?
 - What are some things they could have done differently?
 - How has this experience made them a stronger person?
 - How can you continue the positive experiences as a family?

Have a “Debrief” with your children to bring closure to the Circuit Breaker experience

- Share with them what you’ve learnt about/from them.
- Affirm your children for adapting and demonstrating the spirit of resilience.
- Explain to your children that Singapore will exit the Circuit Breaker and resume activities safely over three phases. Discuss with them about how the family can make adjustments (e.g. travelling safely to school, new care arrangements) to transit into the next phase.



Get ready to embark on the phase of safe opening

- Share with your children the [arrangements for schools](#) and the [measures that would be in place](#) when school reopens in Term 3 and explain to them the importance of taking these measures seriously. This will help your children to be mentally prepared.
- There are new measures on top of those that were introduced in Term 2, as such:
 - Students and staff are required to wear masks.*
 - Students and staff who have adult household members who have flu-like symptoms (e.g. fever and cough), will be required to stay home.

*** Face shields will only be allowed in place of masks for specific exempt groups or settings, where the wearing of masks may not be practical. They are:**

- Children 12 years and below, who may have difficulty wearing and keeping masks on for a prolonged period of time;
- Persons who have health conditions that may result in breathing or other medical difficulties when a mask is worn for a prolonged period of time; and
- Persons, including teachers, who are speaking to a group in a classroom or lecture-style setting, where they are able to maintain a safe distance from others.



- **Have a discussion with your children about their concerns on returning to school and how these concerns could be resolved. Remember, it is not just about the academics! Children may also have social concerns (e.g. anxiety about meeting their friends again, not being able to spend as much time with their parents).**
- **In schools, the teachers will also guide the children to put in place these measures and understand the importance of everyone playing our part and staying united to overcome COVID-19.**

**By complementing each other's efforts,
we can do more for each child in partnership
than we could do alone.**

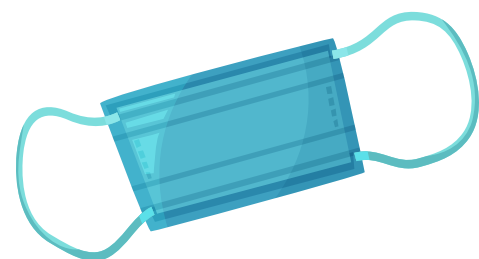


For Back to School weeks...

- Old habits take time to change and new ones might take some getting used to.
- Practising routines will help your children have a smoother transition. For younger children, here are some possible routines to practise:

For example:

Wearing of mask



When schools re-open, all our staff and students will be required to wear a mask* when in school. Wearing a mask for an extended period of time will be uncomfortable but it is necessary to keep our children safe. Help your child slowly get used to mask wearing by practising as a family (e.g. start by putting on the mask for 30 mins each day and progressively increasing the duration).

Provide a ziploc bag for them to keep their mask when they remove it for meals or PE lessons.

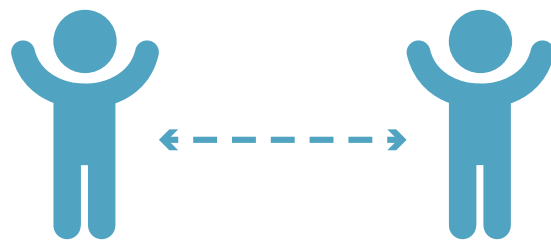
*** Face shields will be allowed for specific exempt groups or settings
(see page 5 for details)**

Hand-washing and wipe down routine



Remind and get your children to be socially responsible by continuing the habit of washing their hands regularly with soap and water and wiping down areas after use when they return to schools.

No intermingling among peers



As safe distancing would be practised when your children return to schools, remind them to follow arrangements (e.g. fixed exam-style seating in classrooms and spaced seating in canteens, and staggered arrival, dismissal and recess timings) and share why it is important to do so.

Bedtime



If your children have been going to bed late, get them to recall the usual bedtime during term time. Guide them to get back to the usual bedtime progressively by getting to bed earlier each day (e.g. adjust the bedtime by 15 – 30 mins each day).



[Click here](#) for more tips on how you and your family can get a good night's sleep.

- **For older children, discuss with them and make a list of routines that they need to start/stop/change/keep to get themselves ready for school.**

For example:

- Good habits they would like to start: Going straight home after school, minimising interactions with friends from other classes
- Unhelpful habits they would like to stop/change: Texting late into the night, spending too much time on online gaming, sharing food with their classmates
- Good habits they would like to keep: Getting enough sleep, good hygiene practices, keeping an open mind to adapt to changes



- **Help keep our schools and your children safe as you have done before the start of Full HBL:**

- Daily temperature-taking with additional visual and verbal screening will continue to be carried out for all students and staff. If your children are feeling unwell, do ensure they visit a doctor and stay home
- If there are adult household members on home quarantine/Stay Home Notice or have flu-like symptoms (e.g. fever and cough), inform the school and keep your children at home
- If your children are travelling to school using the public transport, get them to set off for school a little earlier to help thin out the arrivals
- If you are fetching your children after school, arrange to meet them further from the school gate to prevent crowding. Do remember to observe safe distancing while waiting for your children!



Staggered entry and dismissal timings will help to minimise congestion on public transport. Transport operators are also stepping up the cleaning of buses and trains, and will use anti-microbial chemical coatings on exposed surfaces. Let's all do our part too – minimise travel during peak hours, refrain from talking to one another or on our phones and maintain good personal hygiene.

For Home-Based Learning (HBL) weeks...



- **Continue the good practices you had put in place during your children's HBL by providing conducive spaces for learning and a supportive environment.**



- **Remember to take this opportunity to build your child's independence as you encourage him or her to take greater ownership of his or her learning in planning their own schedules.**



- **HBL in alternate weeks will continue to involve both online and offline modes. This adds variety to HBL activities and allows your children's learning to benefit from the full range of resources.**



- **With teachers delivering lessons in-person for levels returning to school while also supporting levels on HBL on the same day, it will be challenging for teachers to offer live lessons during HBL. Hence, please understand if HBL taps on more online (but not live) and print materials during this next phase.**



For more tips on an effective HBL experience for your children, visit the past issues of our Parent Kit on HBL [here](#).

“Adversity can produce tenacity. Adversity can produce audacity. Because we have found new ways of learning. We have surprised even ourselves.”

– Ms Liew Wei Li, Director of Schools.



Watch [this video](#), where Ms Liew speaks to a parent, and shares how teachers are looking forward to welcoming students back in school, and how many are working behind the scenes to prepare for a safe opening after the Circuit Breaker.



COVID-19 has put Singapore, families and schools in a challenging situation. It has brought about many inconveniences, but it has also been a valuable experience where we've learnt, unlearnt and relearnt as individuals, as families and as parents.

Let's build on the positive experiences and lessons learnt (e.g. greater independence and social responsibility in our children, resilience in our children and as a family, practicing gratitude, making family bonding time a habit) to journey on towards a COVID-safe Singapore! #SGUnited

Give yourself a pat on the shoulder. It has been no easy feat to balance WFH and guiding your children through HBL for the past 2 months.

On behalf of our schools, we look forward to welcoming our children back in school!



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