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Eat smart

Parents worried about their children being out of their care all day can take heart — a good breakfast before they leave is like a gift that keeps on giving. An extra 10 minutes in the morning for a healthy breakfast is worth more than its weight in terms of setting up a child for success throughout the day, nutritionists say.

Try these fast breakfast ideas:

- Boiled egg, toast and apple sauce.
- Cereal bar, yogurt cup and orange.
- Lower-fat muffin, nuts and milk.
- Canned fruit, pita pockets with cheese slices.
- Whole wheat bagel topped with lower-fat cream cheese and tomato slices
- Breakfast banana split: Cut banana lengthwise and top with yogurt and a handful of your favorite cereal.
- Breakfast smoothie: Toss in fruit, low fat milk and ice cubes into a blender. Pour into a portable cup and you're out the door! Frozen fruit also works well.
- Spread peanut butter on a tortilla wrap or pita bread, place a banana on top and roll it up.
- Crackers, cheese and grapes (be aware of choking hazards for young children).
- Spread lower-fat cream cheese on a tortilla wrap or pita bread, place lean deli meats and cheese on top. Roll and microwave for 20 seconds.
- Leftovers (e.g. pasta, pizza, noodles, rice, etc.) with juice.
- Cook scrambled egg in the microwave, place on half toasted English muffin. Top with cheese.
- Cereal (hot or cold) with milk, sprinkle dried fruit or nuts.

Source: Palliser Health Region Community Nutritionists School Nutrition Handbook (Lethbridge, Alta.)



Avery Bliss, 4, and his mother Becky Little tour his junior kindergarten classroom during a pre-school at St. Paul's School on Hilliard Street. For more photos see the photo gallery online at www.peterboroughexaminer.com

Clifford Skarstedt, Examiner

Beating school stress

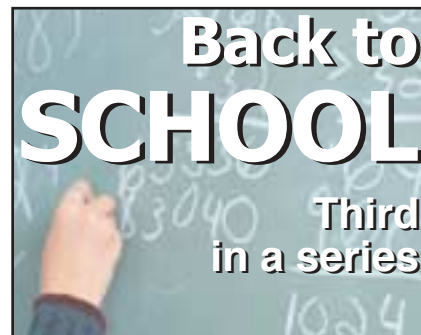
By **JEANNE PENGELLY**
Examiner Education Writer

Tips to cope

You can help your children manage Back-to-School stress:

- Listen. Be aware of what might be bothering your child.
- Ask open-ended questions like "Can you tell me more about that?"
- Recognize and acknowledge their fear or anxiety.
- Engage in solutions.
- Stay engaged and talk to the teacher if necessary.

Source: George Dimitroff, psychologist with the Peterborough Victoria Northumberland and Clarington Catholic District School Board



brochures and handouts, and have moved kindergarten registration forward into the previous school year to help ease the transition.

The Canadian Psychological Association acknowledges the stresses of starting school, and advises parents to take stock of their own — and their children's — feelings about back-to-school, saying what a child packs in their heart that first day back is as important as what he packs in the pencil case.

The association offers tips:

- Make the time to talk to your children about going back to school. Ask them what they are feeling — and let them know how you are feeling, too.

- Be an active listener — when your children are talking, listen. Be interested in what they have to say and focus on their feelings (rather than yours) when you are talking.

- Emphasize the positive things about going back to school like seeing old friends (or making new ones) and learning new things.

- Try to transition your child into a consistent school-night routine one or two weeks before school starts.

- Consider adjusting your own schedule so that you are home at the end of the school day for the first week.

- Resolve to eat dinner together as a family a few times a week. This is a good time to find out what your child has been up to inside and outside of school.

Little is the first to admit she is keen on her son starting school.

"He's ready," she said easily. "He was ready last year."

Avery knows his ABCs and 123s and he's learning to tie his own shoelaces.

But despite the best preparation, things come up last minute.

For example, Little learned this week there won't be time for shoelaces at school; velcro will be needed. There will also be none of her son's favourite peanut butter sandwiches in his lunch — the school encourages peanut-free snacking.

Little was busy thinking of last-minute alternatives.

Yet all a mother's worry in the world is lost on Bliss, who leaps from her knee to catch the end of "The Backyardigans," his favourite television program.

His adventure begins Thursday, when he attends for his first half-day.

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(Online at 1:40 a.m. today)

Quickly

Woman accused of \$20,000 fraud

A woman faces 88 charges as the result of a fraud investigation by city police.

A woman stole the driver's licence and social insurance number belonging to her 59-year-old female roommate and used them to get a line of credit and three credit cards in the other woman's name, police said.

She used those cards to buy clothes and food, to rent cars and to vacation in the U.S., police said, estimating the total amount spent at \$20,000.

Wendy Luxton, 42, of Park Street North, is charged with using a credit card obtained by the commission of an offence, forgery, personation and theft under \$5,000.

She was to appear in court yesterday morning.

(Online at 9:41 a.m. yesterday)

Countdown to Sept. 8

On Sept. 8, not only will you be able to see The Peterborough Examiner's newly designed website but you can also be part of it.

While The Examiner grows its own website with more photos, more videos, more stories and more ways of giving you information, you can now register to be part of the community website that will also be on our web address.

Starting Sept. 8 you will be able to post your information, send your own news, be a citizen journalist, post photographs, videos, blogs, whatever you wish on a community website that allows you to download directly onto it. And others can upload so others can download. Sounds like a load of fun but also a good way to get your information out.

You can pre register now at www.URpeterborough.com where you can also find out more about this project.

But your group, organization, sports team, church, school, company can get your information to thousands here and around the world with this free, yes FREE, service.

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Watch out for little pirates — there could be quite a few of them on city sidewalks Tuesday morning.

Tuesday is back-to-school for more than 15,000 children in Peterborough city and county. It's the day summertime memories become relics, and school time schedules take centre stage.

For Avery Bliss, this week is to be his shining moment.

It's his first day of school ever — an adventure most fitting for a would-be pirate.

"Oh, I'm really excited," said the 4 1/2 year old, who imagines himself a Pirate of the Caribbean, and has appropriate clothes picked out for the occasion.

His eyes widen at the thought of his new classroom.

"There's even one shopping cart, and it only goes straight forward and back," he said, the words tumbling out. "First it only turned one way; now it turns both ways."

If new toys are turning on her son's imagination, the thought of saying goodbye Tuesday is giving Becky Little's heart a run for its money.

"It's hard," she said yesterday after explaining how she's done everything a new school parent should. She's filled in registration forms, read everything she could find about sending her child to school, listened to advice from friends and her own parents and even attended an orientation in her

son's classroom.

"My biggest fear is that he'll be OK, that he'll need Mommy. I mean what if he has a temper tantrum?" she said. "You want your kid to be safe, but now he won't be with me all the time. It's the realization that your kid's growing up."

Little is like most other parents who are saying goodbye to their first school-aged child, says George Dimitroff, psychologist with the Peterborough Victoria Northumberland and Clarington Catholic District School Board.

"Any kind of change is going to affect everyone to some extent," Dimitroff said. "In a new school year, there's always change. Everyone fears change."

Dimitroff says it is natural for young children — and their parents — to feel fear.

Local school board provide

Changing schools, new grades can make child anxious

By **JEANNE PENGELLY**
Examiner Staff Writer

The stress of either changing schools or heading into a new grade can be overwhelming, even for children who have had no negative experiences, says Catholic board psychologist George Dimitroff.

"A lot of kids are quite resilient," he said.

Some, however, have a more anxious temperament and will be naturally hesitant.

This is the type of child whose imagination creates all sorts of scenarios, Dimitroff said.

They'll be the ones not sleeping

much this weekend, the worrywarts, and the ones who show more than "first-day" jitters.

Be aware, Dimitroff says — these children need parents to listen and understand. If not, the problem could take hold and lead to serious absenteeism in the higher grades.

"It's a fine balance for parents," Dimitroff said. "Some parents may say 'suck it up and get going to school,' but that isn't the most beneficial way to approach it."

Other tips:

- Ask open-ended questions, like "what can you tell me about your feelings about going back to school?"

Then, acknowledge the fear rather than sweeping it away. Say "I understand what you're saying."

Even rephrase what your child tells you. For example, "You're saying 'nobody will like me that first day,'" then say "on the other hand, everyone has to go to school, so we have an issue here. What have you thought of as a possible solution?"

"Engage with the solution rather than the fear," Dimitroff advised. Parents who focus too much on the fear are less able to come up with solutions, he said.

Most importantly, don't drop the subject, he said.

A small portion of students will

struggle all through school with change, but in extreme cases, alert the teacher ahead of time, who may be able to help.

Engaging teachers in the solution is often key, Dimitroff said.

Attendance counsellors report they are often the last to know there has been a problem when a child is chronically absent in the higher grades, he said.

"The time to solve the problem is now," he said.

"Don't ignore it otherwise you may find yourself using discipline Tuesday morning to get your child out the door."

Fighting back tears on child's first day of school

Sitting in the kitchen of Becky Little was a little like sitting next to a former version of my own self.

September, 1994. Moose Factory, Ont. — My son Andrew, 4, stands in bright green rain boots and plaid (red) jacket all ready for his first day of junior kindergarten. New school, new town, new friends — well none, really.

He had his knapsack and snack bag ready. He was only to go for half-days, yet his mother was still a wreck.

We got to the curbside far too early — too much time for tears to accumulate as we waited for the big yellow school bus. But I fought



By **JEANNE PENGELLY**
Examiner Staff

was hardly taller than the first step of the bus. The driver, Jack, looked burly.

Andrew didn't know any of the children.

He looked smaller than the other children, who peered like giants from the bus windows.

Andrew wouldn't even get a window seat, I thought.

But as he mounted the second step, almost on his knee, he turned and said, "don't worry, Mom."

And there he left me on the dirt road, waving and shaking my head. He was only to go around the block to the school on the big yellow school bus, yet I still followed in my car.

Then a year or two later I had to admit, I'd come right into the school that day and hidden behind the

wall — just to make sure Andrew found his coat rack and classroom.

I also peeked through the classroom window that morning to be sure he was actually joining the circle and not having a temper tantrum.

I'm not sure I ever admitted that to him.

Now Andrew is 17 and is heading into his final year of high school.

Next year, I'll be saying goodbye to him at the steps of a university somewhere, and no doubt, I will fight back as many tears as I did the day this adventure began 14 years ago.

For what's motherhood but one adventure after another?