

The Wheels on the Bus Go...

Tips for Back to School

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Pain Points

- Fewer denials/restrictions
- Not many social opportunities
- Looser (or different) routines
- Fear (from unpredictability)



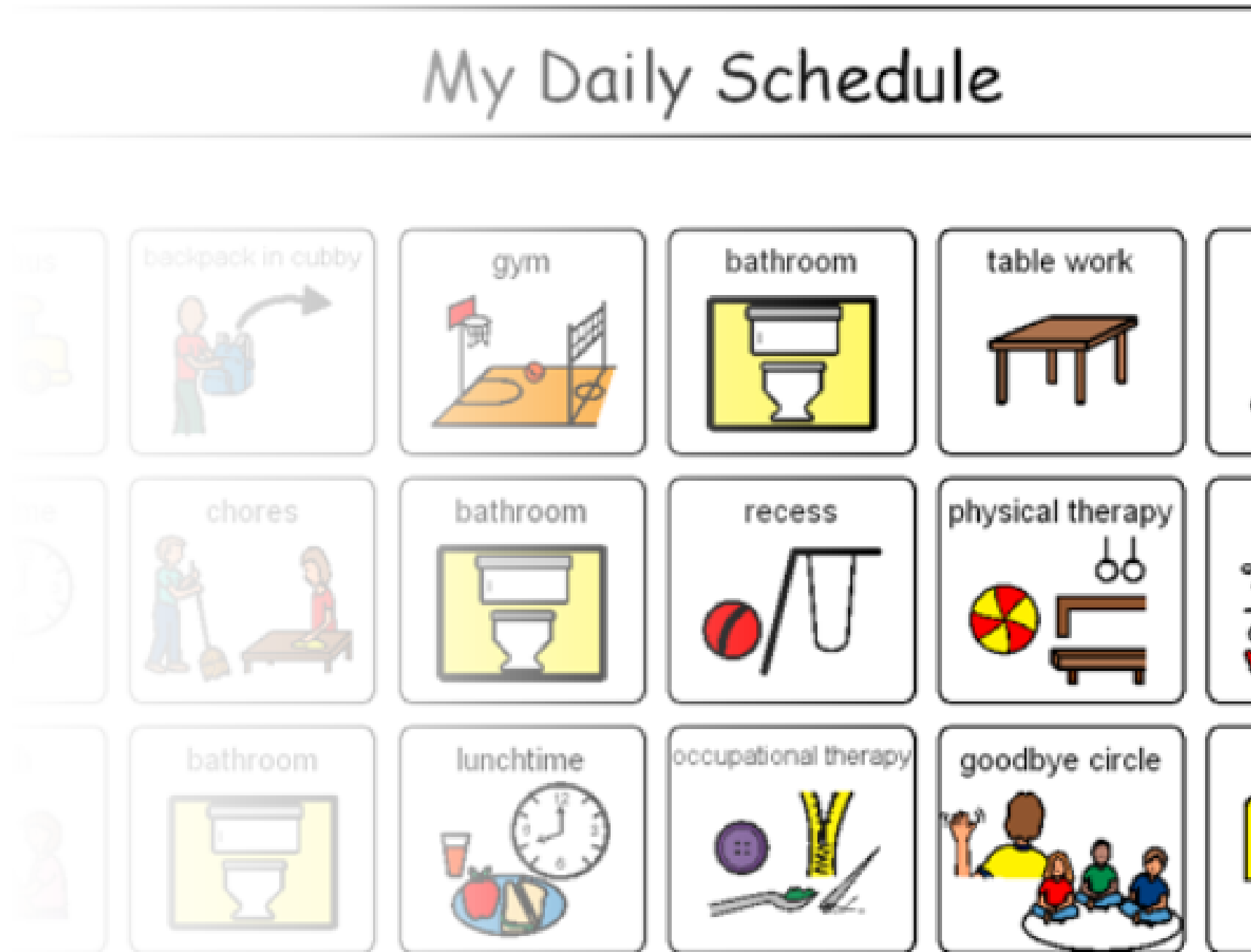


Prepare

- Prepare for change
- Visit school ahead of time
- Practice school skills at home
- Establish communication expectations with school
- Reestablish bedtime and waking routines

Routines Can Help

- Establish a new and predictable routine to help lessen anxiety
- Ease into new routines
- Review how their routine will be different
- What will be the typical routine?
 - morning routine, bus pickup procedures or other transportation changes, classroom schedule and routines, new routines introduced by the school (such as handwashing routines), lunch and cafeteria procedures, recess and gym class rules, after school activities
- Visual schedule



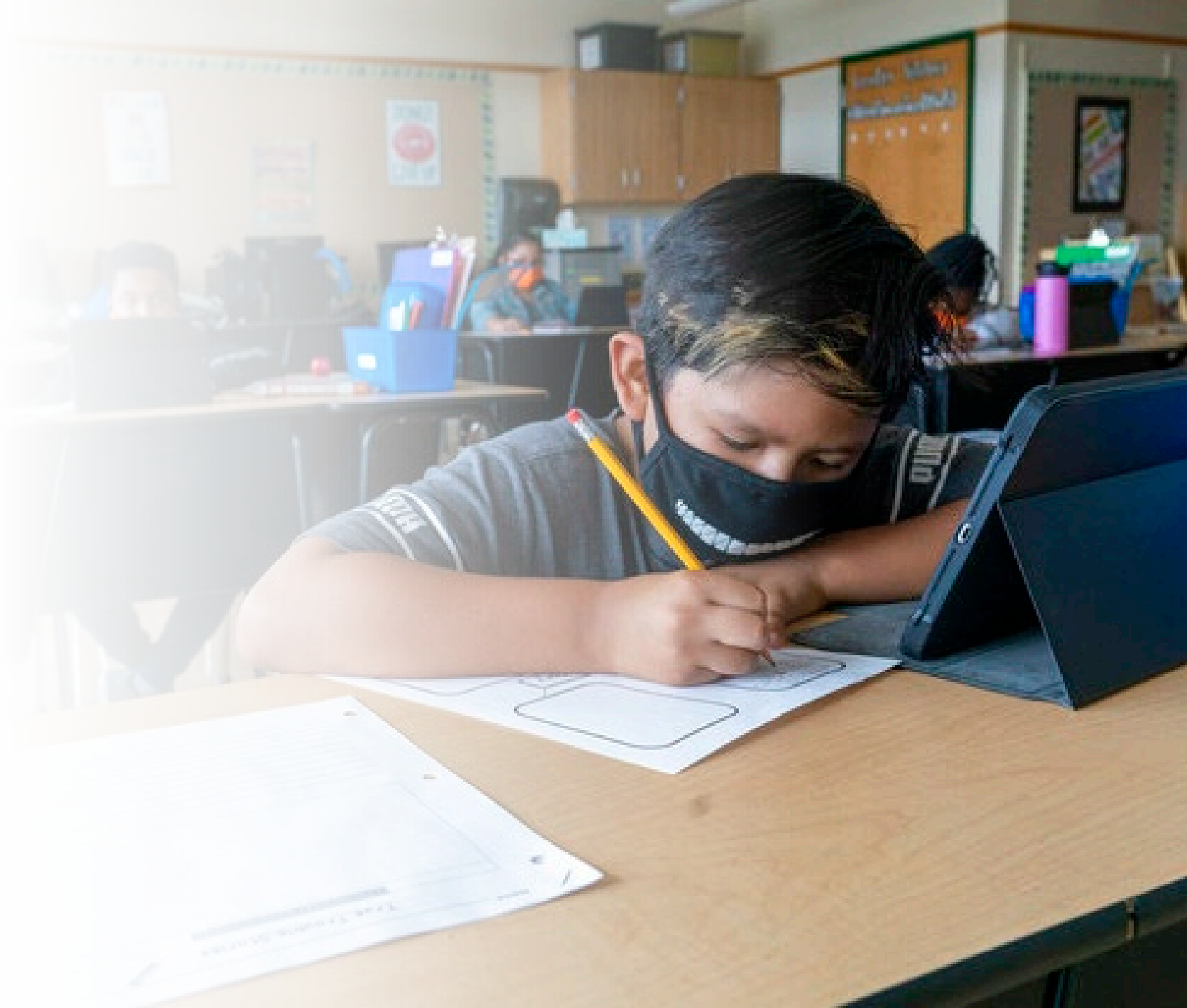
Social Skills

- Having been without social situations means that there have been fewer chances for skills to develop or be maintained
- Work on social things at home (for example, conversation skills)
- Be creative in developing ways for your child to socially interact
 - Outdoor activities such as walks, bike riding, and the playground can be fun
 - Online games and video games also have an interactive and social component to them
- Attending social skills groups



COVID & Schools

- Be prepared for evolving/changing requirements
- Practice wearing masks and social distancing
- Teach social distancing with specific cues
- Talk with schools about concerns





Self-Care

- Manage your own anxiety
- Make time for stress relief. Exercise, daylight, good diet, hobbies, and music are all supportive activities
- Ask for help. Do not be afraid to reach out for professional help or other supports



Tips for Success

- Prepare for emotional situations
- Listen empathically and non-judgmentally
- Be patient
- Talk about and practice any calming strategies that have worked such as deep breathing, listening to music, asking for a break/walk, etc.
- Focus on positive things related to school



Tips for Success

- Keep your expectations reasonable
- Consider your child's developmental level and chronological age of your child
 - concrete and simple explanations are preferred
 - Avoid abstract language and over-explaining
 - listen carefully to your child's specific concerns and tailor your response to them
- Use social stories and photographs as reminders



Tips for Success

- Decompression time – what do they need when they get home from school
- Build in extra time for physical activity
- Get plenty of time outside and family-based social activities
- Take your children on outings
- Enjoy your time together!





Questions & Answers

Thank You!