



Making education fit for all kids

How to keep communication open with your child about how they are coping

Your child may experience a range of emotions or thoughts while transitioning to onsite learning. Keeping communication lines open can provide opportunities for you to support your child as they express their emotions and thoughts. Dr Carmel Sivaratnam, Clinical Child Psychologist and Senior Research Fellow, provides key strategies for supporting communication during this time.

1. **Initiate** an open conversation or create a space where your child is able to express how they are feeling about returning to school. If this is challenging for your child, use aids such as AllPlay Learn's [emotions cards](#) and books to start the conversation or help them become aware of how they are feeling. Even if your child is unable to communicate how they are feeling to you, it is important to create an environment of openness where they know they are in a safe space to express their emotions in ways they are comfortable with.

2. **Acknowledge** that it has been a new and challenging experience and that it is okay to not be coping (and it is equally okay to be coping really well)!

3. **Share** your own experience and how you have felt about your own transitions back to work or other daily activities, if you think it is helpful.

4. **Advocate** for your child where needed. Let the school know if there are specific things that would be important for them to know about your child's transition, and anything you think may be helpful, e.g. will they benefit from a smaller group setting before transitioning back to a normal-sized classroom?

5. **Find time to connect** and check in after school in a way that works for the family. Some children may have been holding their emotions in all day, so support when transitioning from the school to home environment may be helpful. Walking home from school together, doing an activity together, or just sitting together for a time are some examples of how you can achieve this.

Carmel is a clinical psychologist who provides assessment and therapy to children and adolescents experiencing social, psychological, emotional and behavioural challenges across multiple health and educational settings; specialising in neurodevelopmental disorders such as ASD and ADHD.



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