



BERNARD ZELL

ANSHE EMET DAY SCHOOL



The end of the school year is filled with lots of excitement and activity. While eager for the summer adventures ahead, students often have mixed feelings about leaving their friends, the comforting structure of school, and their teachers. They can also be worrying about what next year will bring and how they will fit in a new classroom, with new classmates and new teachers.

This can be expressed in many ways. Children may seem a bit more emotional, push boundaries or seek out your attention more than normal or in uncharacteristic ways. We see this at school, too! What children are really communicating is that they need the adults around them to provide the structure to help them continue to feel safe and to have a place to share their thoughts. This can be hard for parents as, often, you may have the same concerns.

The following are my tried and true tips to help you navigate the end-of-school feelings your child may be experiencing.

- Be consistent:
 - Maintain normal bedtime and wake-up routines despite the nicer weather and end-of-year events your families may be involved in.
 - Hold tight to your expectations and follow through on what you say you are going to do.

- Be a good listener:
 - As parents, we often feel like we need to solve everything for our children. While it is hard to watch them go through a challenge, it is important to help them be reflective and self-sufficient. Think about the questions you could ask that would allow them to plan for next steps, to practice perspective taking, and to feel competent about their ability to handle the situations that come their way. At the same time, let them know that you will always be there to provide support and follow up when needed.
 - Keep in contact with your child's teachers so they can help you as you navigate supporting your child. We are in this together!

- Watch what you say:
 - Liz Warrick, a parenting coach in Winchester, Massachusetts, advises to ease up on the talk about how your child's going to be a "big first-grader (SKer or JKer)" now. If she tells you she's nervous about next year, don't brush her off by saying, "You'll be fine!" Instead, remind her of other new situations in which she was anxious and how she handled it. You could also tell your child a story of when you were nervous in a new situation and how you overcome your fears. "Kids love to hear stories about their parents," says Warrick. "They can't imagine that we ever have any trouble."
 - Reassure your child (and yourself) that the next school year will be a great opportunity for learning and connecting with both new classmates and teachers. Your children are smart cookies — when they see you anxious, they get anxious themselves!