

## Back to School At Applewood - Helpful Information For Parents

### Getting involved at your child's school - Maya Cohen

Research suggests that parental involvement in school is vital to a child's academic success. However, if you're a single parent, a working parent, or a parent with little spare time, you may find it difficult to find ways to get involved. The following list of recommendations comes from the [Harvard Family Research Project](#), an organization committed to advancing education.

1. **Attend teacher-parent conferences.** If the scheduling of conferences conflicts with your work schedule, speak to the teacher and principal about your situation, and work out a time when you can meet.
2. **Get over your own insecurities.** The Harvard Family Research Project found that parents who had negative childhood experiences at school are less likely to get involved in their children's academic programs, and may feel uncomfortable contacting teachers. Remember that your child's academic experience is important and vital to his professional success; don't let your own obstacles hinder your child's success.
3. **Get to know your child's teacher.** If you work the late shift, drop your child off at school and chat with the teacher in the morning. If you are not available during the school day, send notes along with your child -- or call or email the teacher -- to introduce yourself, to ask questions, and to raise your concerns.
4. **Stay involved by encouraging extracurricular activities.** If you are unavailable during the day, try to pick your child up from after-school activities. Arrive a few minutes early and watch your child in action. Talk to your child about how activities are going.
5. **Use a translator.** Parents who speak English as a second language can get in touch with their child's school and request a translator. It's important for all parents to have their questions answered and their concerns properly communicated.



### Helping when parents feel separation anxiety - Maya Cohen

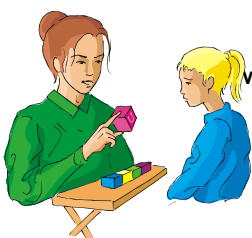
Separation anxiety isn't just for kids. A lot of parents feel acutely nervous when their child begins school or leaves for summer camp. You may worry about your child's adjustment, or just miss spending time with him. While this is completely normal, there are ways you can alleviate your stress when your child flies the coop.

**Stay busy.** Those two simple words are the key to surviving separation anxiety. Plan ahead and schedule activities before your child leaves, so that you will be occupied in the days after her departure. Even if you don't feel like participating in these activities, go through the motions and allow yourself some time to adjust. Remember how important it is to fill your days, and don't allow yourself to mope around the house. Get moving!

**Get support from other parents in similar circumstances.** Form a club or start your own Parents' Class. Get together regularly to have some child-free fun, or just to share how much you miss your kids. Lean on parents who will understand and empathize.

**Enjoy your time!** Think about all the things you always wanted to do but couldn't, because of your parental responsibilities. Now's your chance! Spend time with a spouse, get involved in yoga, take a class, or redecorate your favorite room in the house.

Most parents have a running mental list of projects, but never have the chance to work on them. Consider this free time a golden opportunity.



**Never make your child feel guilty.** It's very likely that your child will pick up on some of your nervousness, but try to maintain a positive attitude. Parental separation anxiety often transfers to children and contributes to their anxiety, which will in turn trouble you and lead to a cycle of guilt. Do your best to be enthusiastic and upbeat about your child's plans. You don't want your child to feel apologetic or to regret his leaving, so make sure that you express only optimistic thoughts.

**Exchange tokens with your child.** Give her something that you made, or a small memento that has meaning for

you. Explain the significance of this gift to your child and ask her to give you a small memento, as well. This way, when you are separated, you both will have a souvenir for comfort.

***J.Ribaric, Applewood School, 2007***