



# BHS A.S.S.I.S.T. Spotlight

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## Back-to-School Tips for Parents

Back-to-school time is around the corner in many areas across the nation. It's an exciting time, full of anticipation. What's my new school like? Who's my teacher? Are all my friends returning this year? Those questions and others like it can have many children dreading the start of the school year, leading to some anxiety. How can parents help their children get ready from a mental health standpoint for the start of a new school year? Here are a few tips:

- **Start your school routine before the first day of school.** Don't wait until the first day of school to get on a school schedule. The best thing you can do is begin a routine before school starts so your child gets to bed and wakes up at normal times and eats on a schedule.
- **Remind your child of what they learned the previous year.** They may have anxiety from thinking they haven't retained what they learned the previous year. Do a short review from the previous year with a couple of math questions, a few spelling words or a couple of science lessons. A brief review will allow them to see what they remember.

- **Familiarize them with where they are going to school.** Ease some anxiety by taking your child to see the school building and facilities before the first day, especially for first timers in kindergarten or pre-kindergarten. If the school has an open house or orientation, take advantage of that. At least walk around the outside of the building, see the playground and show your child that school is fun and more than sitting in a classroom.
- **Stay engaged beyond the first day of school.** After the first day, keep asking about their time at school and make sure the lines of communication with your child stay open. You need to be excited about their school day. Be intentional and create time to talk.

Source: [Youthvillages.org](https://youthvillages.org)

**If you have questions or would like additional guidance, your designated BHS Care Coordinator can help. To learn more about the benefits available to you and your family, call 800-245-1159 or visit the website at [www.behavioralhealthsystems.com](https://www.behavioralhealthsystems.com).**



## How to Delegate Effectively

According to a survey of administrative professionals, delegating meaningful tasks is one of the top ten most desired qualities in a manager or boss. Yet so few of us know how to delegate effectively. Many fear that if something goes wrong, they will be responsible. However, when you delegate, you get more completed, work less hours and produce more meaningful work. Just as important; you can help others learn and develop. Here are some simple tips to help you delegate effectively:

- **Why delegate when you can eliminate?** You may discover that some of your tasks or meetings are unnecessary. There is no need to pawn them off on someone else when you can simply remove them from your to-do list.
- **Step back and take a hard look at your calendar and inbox.** Examine all your tasks, conference calls and meetings for the upcoming week. Which of these are candidates for delegation? Some may be lower priority items. Others might present learning opportunities for someone in your work group.

- **Don't set someone up to fail.** When you delegate a task, make sure the person is capable of performing it successfully. For example, you'd like to unload some of your budget responsibilities, but no one in your group has the skills to take on the task. Mention this opportunity when you conduct your regular appraisals. One of your employees might have an interest and be willing to schedule the required training.
- **Motivate the person to whom you are delegating.** Communication is critical. If they understand the impact their work has on the company, they will buy in and be more committed to the assignment. Also, think about what the motivating factors are for each person (career advancement, financial gain, success, etc.).

**If you need more advice and support, your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provides free and confidential assessment and counseling resources. To learn more, call BHS at 800-245-1150 or visit the website at [www.behavioralhealthsystems.com](http://www.behavioralhealthsystems.com).**





## Hobbies Can Improve Your Life

Hobbies and leisure activities that engage your concentration are good for your health, mind, mood and relationships. When they draw on or grow into a personal passion, hobbies can add meaning and purpose to your life. By pulling your thoughts and your body out of work pressures and daily worries, they could provide a space to recharge your energy and renew your focus.

**Give yourself permission to take a break and do something you enjoy.** It's like scheduling "me" time in your calendar. When you engage in a hobby regularly, you make it a habit. Instead of feeling guilty that you're not working, it becomes part of your routine, something you plan your work and other responsibilities around.

**Improve your physical and mental health.** Engaging in enjoyable leisure activities has been found to lower blood pressure, improve perception of overall physical function and reduce stress and depression. Physical hobbies, like swimming, running or cycling, can also help you build muscle, improve heart health and maintain a healthy weight.

**Forge new social connections.** Some hobbies, like playing games or music with other people, are naturally social. By engaging in these activities, you make and strengthen social connections. An interest in birding or hiking can lead to new friends with shared interests. Even solitary hobbies can lead to social connections by sharing your output, technique or plans in online communities.

**Choose a hobby that engages your mind.** The benefits of hobbies come from their ability to engage you and remove you from the swirl of everyday concerns. When considering new hobbies, try out activities that challenge you, make you think and require you to learn new skills. The ideal hobby is one that leads you to experience *flow*—a state of mind in which you are fully absorbed in what you are doing and can lose track of time.

The idea of taking up a hobby for pleasure, diversion and stress relief can feel at odds with an always-on and always-productive culture. But give it a try. There's little risk and huge potential for improving your life.

### **RECIPE: Stir-Fried Zucchini • 8 servings • 10 minutes cook time**

**Ingredients** • 2 lbs. sliced zucchini • 2 minced garlic cloves • 1/4 cup of olive oil • 1/2 tsp. salt • 1/2 tsp. Italian seasoning • 1/4 tsp. ground pepper

**Instructions** • Heat a large skillet on Medium-High • Add zucchini garlic in the olive oil and sauté until crisp (around 5 minutes) • Remove from heat • Add seasonings • Serve warm • Mix it up with other vegetables like summer squash or broccoli!

