

# *Helping Students (and parents) transition back to a new Academic year!*

Whether you are returning to Madressa/ School in person or online there can be no doubt that transitions are always challenging for both kids and parents! We hope this resource will help create discussion about the upcoming year with your child!

Your child may or may not show some anxiousness towards going back to Madressa/School, still take the time out to discuss with them what's to come in the days and weeks before the academic year starts. Understanding routines and expectations before hand sets the intention for the upcoming year. Children whose parents take an active role in their education tend to perform better in school and on standardized tests than other kids, research has found.

## *Strategies for supporting and reassuring your child*

Looking for ways to meet the needs of a child who is trying to cope with feelings of anxiety about heading back to Madressa or school? Here are a few tips.

**1. Accept and validate your child's emotions.** Let your child know that their feelings make sense (“Everyone is feeling a bit anxious and uncertain right now. It makes sense that you would be feeling that way, too”) and make sure your child understands that there's no such thing as a “bad” or “wrong” emotion. It's okay to be feeling whatever it is they're feeling.

**2. Look for opportunities to address your child's specific worries and concerns in an age-appropriate way.** This might mean helping them to find answer to their biggest questions or role-playing particular scenarios that are causing them undue stress. You might also want to encourage them to zero in on coping strategies that have worked well for them in the past. They might want to work those strategies again.

**3. Remind your child that they can turn to other people for support, both at home and at Madressa.** They don't have to handle this on their own. If your child has some special needs, work with the Madressa teacher to let them know what strategies work best with your child.

**4. Recognize the opportunity you are being given in this moment.** The literature on resilience is clear: children are capable of weathering even the stormiest of storms if they can rely on the love and support of at least one caring adult. You have the opportunity to be that person—an emotional anchor in an otherwise stormy sea

Strategies adapted from CMHO- Children's Mental Health of Ontario