

## Managing the Transition to Work and School

With Australia Day over many people are returning to the busy routine of work and school – it can be a stressful time!

### How do you manage the transition from holiday to work?

- Get back into your usually sleep/wake cycle – If you've been staying up late and sleeping until 8am during the holidays you may be seedy for the first few days but persevere.
- Have regular meals – During the holidays you may have grazed through the day and just had one main meal at night but this won't do at work! Get back into the routine of three meals a day – if you're not a "breakfast person", grab a protein drink to give your brain morning energy!
- Spend a day clearing the clutter – go through your emails, clear any old clothes out of your cupboard or clean out the garage. Start putting things in your diary.
- Exercise – If you haven't been exercising during the holidays, it's time to get back into it but be gentle as you would have lost some fitness.

### How do Settle the Kids for School?

- Get them into the sleep/wake cycle they'll need for school – up and to bed at a regular time.
- Get the household routine in place – meals, showering, dressing at a regular time.
- Don't skip breakfast! – Kids need breakfast so they can concentrate at school.
- Get your kids involved in planning school lunches – check out recipe sites for ideas on preparing fresh fruit or vegetables, sandwiches or wraps.
- Together with your child, prepare a quiet area for them where they can do homework and read. Each child should have their own area with their own pens, paper etc.
- Set and start to implement guidelines for computer/social media or phone calls – if your child isn't going to be allowed to use the phone after 8pm during school terms, start it now.
- Talk to your child about any concerns they may have about school – they may be worried about fitting in at a new school or may not like their teacher – talk to them about what they can do.
- Watch for signs of anxiety – a child who becomes withdrawn, uncharacteristically irritable or aggressive may be anxious. Ask them what they're worried about and talk about it.
- Make sure they're orientated – if your child is going to a new school or new after school care, make sure they know where they're going and how to get there.

### How do you stop the stress creeping up?

- Get organised – Don't leave it until the weekend to check that everything is ready for school or work! Especially, check the little things: lunchboxes, socks and bus timetables.
- Plan Ahead – Each week, maybe Sunday, work out what has to be done that week, when and by whom. Write a "to do" list, including who has to do it and when, on a calendar or put a white board where everyone can see it. Make sure everyone has a job!
- Be Ready – How much can you do in advance? Maybe make lunches or set out breakfast the night before? And importantly, get the kids to pack their school bag before going to bed!
- Delegate – you don't have to do everything yourself! Get the kids to help around the house: put away the washing, help make their lunch for school or do the dishes.

### What else can help?

- Drink lots of water – sometimes the return to work also means a return to caffeine!
- Remember the fun times – put some pictures around of your holiday. If there was a game you played as a family, get it out from time to time.
- If you're feeling a little overwhelmed, massage or acupuncture may help!