

# THE RESILIENT KID PODCAST

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## Season 2 – Episode 6

### Back to School College

Hello and welcome to the Resilient Kid Podcast. This is the back-to-school college.

I know some of you are back there kind of in the next couple of days, so I'm not for another week or so. And actually, I think as parents it's really lovely to be in the summer and kind of.

Not have the routine, not have to worry about getting up, doing the whole school run prepping them, things like that.

But actually, getting back into that routine, as hard as it is at the beginning is really good for the kids, but also good for us. We know where we're up to. We know what we're doing. It's so. It's this podcast today is to help us transition back into that as smoothly as possible. So, if you've not been here before, I'm Ashley Costello, psychotherapist I specialize in resilience and my company is called The Resilient Kid.

I have a book out called. A Guide To Raising A Resilient Kid, which despite the name as in kid, as in little person, it really isn't. It's for any age at all. And you can catch Catherine Sandland, who has children, teens and older kids interviewing me in the last episode which will tell you more about the book if you want to know.

Anyway, without more further ado let's move on to top tips for making that transition back to school college as easy as possible for the kids and for us as well. So, talk about what they're looking forward to. So, I even have some school refusers that I do this to. So, school refusers is somebody who because of usually anxiety or if they've been bullied things like that.

They haven't been to school for quite some time and I even talk about what are the things that you're looking forward to and talk about how they're feeling and listen

let them listen Let them express how they feel without jumping in I like to say stuff like, oh, you sound worried. Okay. So, let's have a look at that.

Really talk about, what are you looking forward to? Is it seeing friends, making new friends, new teacher, new school, new college. And also talk about. When they say about excited, nervous, excited and nervous are exactly the same response in the body. It's how our brain labels it for us. So, when they say they're nervous, don't dismiss it, but say, okay, so what are you excited about as well?

And how does that feel? And often getting students to recognize feelings in their body, they realize that I.

They know I'm listening is to repeat back to them. So, for instance, you sound worried, what's the worst thing that could happen? Yeah. Talk that out. What's the evidence that that would happen? What can you do? Get them to problem selves. Problem solve themselves instead of us jumping in trying to problem solve for them.

So, it's a really good way of getting them to look at the positive stuff and what are they looking forward to. I would say start this as early as possible. Familiarity. Right. What do I mean with this? Well, there is always going to be some changes. That does not, unless they're going to school for the very first time and if they are, what I would say is you've probably been for a visit, so tell me what you remember from your visit.

Whether that is a teacher, meeting new people, the size of the chairs, the classroom, anything like that. So, whether it's starting school for the very first time or starting a new school, they will have usually visited. So, Talk about that. And also, you as parents do your research. What do you know about the school yourself?

Whether it's, oh, they do this extracurricular. Have a look on the website. What do they, what classes do they do at lunchtime and after school? Who do you know that goes there? What does the school look like? Show them pictures if they haven't done that. But also, you familiarize yourself with it.

And let them if it is that they are just changing year groups, changing, years and they're moving up, then talk about what's different this year. Talk about the changes. So, everything probably, in primary in secondary, there's a lot of the same

routines. It could be that as they move up, it might be something like them changing.

Yes, they're going to probably change teachers. They might start to move around the school a little bit more if they're in prep or primary. They might start to have more teachers involved. So, as they move up into kind of years three and four, and they start doing languages, different things like that, they might have different teachers come in.

So those kinds of changes, it might be that they go and get their own lunch. If it's secondary, okay, what's the changes there? Is it that they'll be choosing options this year? Is it that they, go to a new part of the school? Even if they're going to college, talk to them about whether that's a sixth form attached to the school or a complete standalone college.

Think around. Okay, tell me about the visit. Tell, when we were there, tell me about how, you know, who do you know that goes there? Have you had a conversation with that person? Because quite often students will know somebody in the year above. So having conversations with those to get themselves familiar with the new routine.

Okay, then positive vibes. Now, I talk about teachers, the school, the colleges in a positive light. So, for instance, my eldest is starting college. We were talking about when A level results came out, how well the college had done people that we knew in college, how they'd got on, things like that.

So, really talk about it in a positive light. If they're in kind of school, talk about their teachers. Oh, I've heard your new teacher's really lovely, or such and such body. A friend told me that your teacher's really smiley, things like that. Did you know, George up the road had your teacher and they said they were really funny, things, just different things.

It doesn't matter what it is. I spoke to my nephew about one of the teachers having, I forgot what they're called. Those little animals that everyone was going mad about on Minecraft. I was gonna say an Anaconda. It's not an Anaconda by the way. It will come back to me anyway. This particular biology teacher collects animals and stuff, and so my, you know, to kind of warm.

My nephew up to that particular teacher, we spoke about the animals that they kept. So, things like that, any look, but keep it positive. Yeah. We don't want them to go in with that negative around either their school, college, or the teacher. So, try and keep it really positive. Build in the routine, start as early as you can.

Okay, if this is a new school or they're going to school for the first time, practice saying goodbye. I know this sounds really daft, but what you're doing is you're setting up in their brain how this is going to go. The more practiced they are, the safer they feel. The less attachment they're going to have, the less likely they are to be upset.

And I don't just say this for the little ones. Okay, if you have got a child either starting school or nursery for the first time, Or, they're going off to high school, think about how that's going to work. Are you going to say goodbye at the bus stop? Are you going to say goodbye at the school gates, classroom door?

Walk them through it. Hold their hand, walk them through it. If they're small, or if... You know, they, you, you can, you're able to do it. Leave them a little note with a snack, just saying like, well done, make a fuss of them. You know, school is a big old thing. And actually, making a fuss them starting back.

Well done card. It's your first day or well done in your high school. Things like really make fuss, make a specialty. It doesn't have to be amazing. Do you know what I mean? You don't have to go out and get a takeaway or take them out for a meal. Do them a favourite tea. That doesn't matter if that's spaghetti on toast, or they get a milkshake with it, or something like that.

Just make a fuss of that first day so that they feel important, they know that you're proud, and that we're just marking the occasion. So, this is a controversial one, but it's only controversial for the kids. Wake up their brain. So, studies tell us that they forget a huge, huge amount over the summer holidays.

The holidays seem to be getting longer. That's not a complaint. But they do seem to be getting longer at the minute and we need to start to wake up the brain. What I have noticed with students and my own kids is that if you. If they suddenly don't do anything at all until, they start back in September, all summer, then it takes until Christmas to get back in the swing of things.

And it is like walking through a treacle for them. It's really difficult. So, we kind of try the last... We sometimes do it if we're at home and we've got nothing to do. But the last kind of couple of weeks before back to school, we start to do little things like, I always try and get them to read over the summer just to keep their brain a little bit oiled.

But the last couple of weeks we would do something like have a look on BBC Bitesize

because it's fun, it's interactive, there are videos, there is no big deal in we're not asking him to do homework, but just look at little things. So, for instance, it could be, I mean, one of the things that we did is we went to a museum because it's all about the slave trade and that is a subject that he's like my youngest gonna study in history next year.

For the eldest, she is taking A levels this year, so brand new for her. She's taking psychology, no pressure. I did not even mention it but what I did was got out an old psych textbook and said to her, have a look at this, have a look at the kind of topics that you, and it's just very light, gently waking up the brain, ready for, then in kind of a week's time, it's not going to come such a shock.

So, yeah, just gently start, whether it's, BBC Bitesize, watching Horrible Histories, reading looking over. kind of work for last year, things like that, but just generally start to wake up the brain. And on that note as well, what I would say to you is and I'd kind of put this under school prep, early nights, start them to get back into a routine.

It takes a good old week or so to get back into that routine of going to bed earlier and waking up earlier. I would say this one alone. If you don't listen to any of the others, this one alone is the one that causes us as parents most stress. So absolutely start them getting in bed early doors. Just to readjust their sleep clock ready for school.

And also buy school stuff. Take them out, get what they need. If they, get them also to check what they've already got. Because, I think it's really tempting to go out and just buy all new. And actually... I was talking to somebody yesterday and they've had the same bag all the way through school because they were really canny in buying one and it still looks brand new.

So, they've had it all the way through school and are going to start sixth form college. So, you don't have to go and buy unnecessary stuff. It could just be going out to buy pencils. But what I would say to you is, that's exciting. Take them with you. Get them geared up for school. And you don't, they do not need 55 highlighters in every color of the rainbow and but make sure they've got basics.

So, if you're in high school, stuff like scientific calculator that you might not have thought of or, a protractor, things like that. I know a lot of primary schools. have their own stuff. They get like little pencil cases at the start of the year and things. So just double check and get what they need, whether that's uniforms or stationery, but get them involved, get them to try on the new uniform, things like that.

And also, as well with our students that are sent in sixth form, have they got enough clothes? Have they got suitable clothes? Some sixth forms that attach to schools have to go in business dress. Others can wear what they want. Is it appropriate is what I'd say. And it's about not, do you want to go to college in a crop top, but what image do you want your teachers to have of you?

Because unfortunately we do judge kids, particularly girls on what they wear. And you want them to have that kind of cross between feeling comfortable, feeling confident, and actually being appropriate in, what is appropriate in A, the weather, and B, in college. So, that's the, that's kind of look at that as well with them.

So, kind of lastly, the day before. When you get to the day before, really talk through almost walking them through hand by hand is what will the day look like tomorrow? So, I often start the night before so I will say stuff like have you got bag ready for tomorrow? What's in it? Do you need me to check over it?

Have you got your lunch card? Have you got Pencil case things like that. Now they very rarely need PE kit do they on the first day but it's, I know some primaries where they take the PE kit in and leave it there and bring it home once a week. So, think about things like that. Okay, so this is what's going to happen.

Check your bag. That's all ready. Where's your shoes? Okay, they're by the door. Is your uniform all hung up? So, start to warm it up. Okay. So, you're going to go to bed at this time, bla, bla, bla. In the morning, you're going to wake up and often they wake up early, don't they? Because it's that, there's kind of that nervous excitement.

But walk them through the day. How does that look? Do you drop them off? Does somebody else pick them up? Do they walk? How, what does that look like? Then your day is going to be, oh, you're meeting your teacher. I wonder what you'll do. It'll be really excited. Then you're going to have lunch, really as much detail as you can do without obviously too much detail where actually you don't know when it's completely wrong and they get home and go, it's your fault.

I didn't do that today. So, we're not going to give them specifics, if we don't know them, but particularly after. Details around for the younger ones drop off and pick up and who's picking up, what time are you picking up? Is that straight after school? Is that after club, college? Are you working home?

Do you, or you're getting a lift or a bus or your bike, whatever it is, but kind of really because you're going to give them the confidence, they're going to feel safer. Then we're less likely to have anxiousness. All right. So, they're the kind of things that to think about, but absolutely look at.

Walking them through the day and then when they get home that night, a little bit of celebration, mine I always like to have pizza on the first day back, sometimes that is more than just them two, there might be a gaggle of friends come with them, but actually just that celebration, well done card, bar of chocolate, if you can, something like that, just to go, well done, that was, you did really well today

And just really, promoting that positive feeling around starting a new year. Sometimes it's a new school too. So, good luck to everyone. I hope you all have a fab time back. Sending your little ones, no matter their size, off to their new adventures this year. And, yeah, so I hope you found them useful.

Let me know how you got on. In the comments, I'd love to hear and if there is any issues or anything that's come up, please drop me a message at [ashley@theresilientkid.co.uk](mailto:ashley@theresilientkid.co.uk) or you can comment under here where you're either seeing or watching the podcast and I'll answer your questions on the next podcast.

Take care everyone. Bye for now.