Back to school with a loved one in recovery

The return to the classroom is never seamless, but for students affected by an eating disorder, back-to-school season can be an especially stressful time. Here's how you can help support your loved one's recovery as the new school year begins.

Questions to consider

- Who is your point person at school for discussing support, accommodations, scheduling, supervision?
- Should you explore accommodations via a Section 504 plan? Or revisit an existing Individualized Education Plan (IEP)?
- What is your plan for timing and supervision of meals at school?
- How will you prepare others to help supervise meals?
- How will you address questions about time off, treatment, and changes to appearance?

Tips for the first day

- Draft an email to your loved one's teachers about their needs that they can reference
- Talk to your school about any assignments, classes, or activities that may need to be missed
- Ensure your loved one has clothes that fit their body now and avoid discussing any sizes or how clothes "look"

> **Seek support from your community to ensure your family has the necessary supervision and assistance to promote success. No carer has endless resources.**

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Equip Therapist

Sign up to get more eating disorder resources

equip.health/newsletter

Safer Classrooms

Partnering with educators on eating disorder awareness

Students and their families can prepare as much as possible for potential school stressors, but teachers and other school staff will be on the front lines once school is in session. Here's how you can collaborate with educators to help your loved one—and all young people—feel safe and confident in their bodies at your school.

How you can help

1. Review assignments for harmful messages around food, weight, and bodies
2. Discuss with educators why such messages are harmful, and offer alternatives
3. Share trusted resources on eating disorders, like ANAD support groups for caregivers teens, and Equip virtual treatment.
4. Offer to organize an eating disorder awareness event, such as a school assembly, PTA meeting, or virtual webinar

Register for ANAD support groups

bit.ly/ANAD-support-groups

Advice you can give educators

- Frame exercise as a positive activity for feeling a certain way, not looking a certain way
- Talk about food in a neutral way, without labeling certain foods as "good" or "bad"
- Apply a critical lens to messages from the media, especially those around food and bodies
- Research the Health at Every Size (HAES) framework and learn to separate health from weight