



BACK to SCHOOL

From supply checklists to getting back on schedule, everything you need for the new year

Pop quiz, parents! Are you ready? • What the heck is boho chic? What should you look for in a perfect pair of jeans? What advice should you share with your college-age child to help them make the transition from home? Is it acceptable to cry when you drop them off at their dorm the first time? (It is. It totally is.) • From elementary-school fashion to the basics of avoiding financial pitfalls with college costs, PennLive/The Patriot-News has your guide to back to school. Inside these pages, as well as in Health and our Saving Money section today, you'll find checklists, tips and advice for your family of students, whether they'll be getting on a bus for the first time or are winding down their college career. • Time's up. Pencils down. School's just around the corner.

Enjoy your final weeks before the big goodbye

While your college freshman agonizes over roommates, class schedules and comforter colors, you're likely spending the dog days of summer wondering just how you got here.

Where did 18 years go? When did your adorable, sweet little baby become this mini adult? How will he survive without you? How will you survive without him?

I wish I could tell you it's going to be easy, Mom and Dad, but



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it's not. The transition will sting. Even if you're used to them being away at summer camp or living overseas as a foreign-exchange

student, college is different. This is for keeps. That was just training wheels.

Remember childbirth? Saying goodbye is a little like that, but without the drugs. You're happy for them and excited for the adventures that lie ahead. But you're sad, too. Your family will never quite be the same. Life is definitely changing.

Yes, this is what we parents have been working toward since we put them on the bus for the

very first time: getting them ready to leave the nest. And believe me, they're ready. And so are you.

My third child leaves in just a few short weeks, and while I'm finding that the packing process is a lot different with boys than girls, (they don't care very much about room decor) cutting the cord hasn't really gotten any easier. I will miss him.

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Find everything your college-bound kid needs to survive his or her first year away from home.
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Tips for parents on getting ready for the first day, including where to find bargains and how to stay organized.
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Get your child back on a regular sleep schedule now. Know which vaccines they need and where to get them.
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