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## Meningococcal Disease PREVENTION Trial

Your child may be eligible for the Meningococcal vaccine study to evaluate the immunogenicity (antibody levels) and safety in toddlers.

We are looking for participants who have completed the full primary vaccination schedule in the first six months as per the Australian National Immunisation Program.

- Is your child generally healthy?
- Aged between 12 and 14 months?
- Does not have a history of meningococcal disease
- Has not received a vaccine against meningococcal disease

Please contact the Paediatric Research Unit at The Canberra Hospital on 6174 7603 for more information.

This study has the approval of the ACT Human Research Ethics Committee.

## parenting

# STARTING SCHOOL



WITH MELANIE COLLINS, MUM ABOUT TOWN

One of my most memorable moments over Christmas was seeing my five-year-old niece dressed up in her new school uniform (Santa bought it for her, very organised of him). I teared up at the sight of her little face looking so grown up and independent, beaming with pride and anticipation in her special school colours and far-too-big hat. I don't envy her mum, waving good-bye to her little girl at the school gates come next week. It's true what they say: they grow up so fast...

And so it rolls around again. After six long, hot weeks, the school holidays are about to wrap up. Whether you're dreading sending your not-so little one off into the world of education or counting down the minutes until that first bell rings, the start of the new school year can bring with it mixed feelings of excitement and anxiety – for parents and children.

For some strategies on how to

deal with the drop-off, whether your kids are starting primary school or transitioning to high school, I enlisted the help of Dr Thomas Nielsen, a specialist in student wellbeing and health, and an Associate Professor at the University of Canberra. With his tips, you can avoid feeling stressed and help your children maintain a positive attitude towards starting the school year.

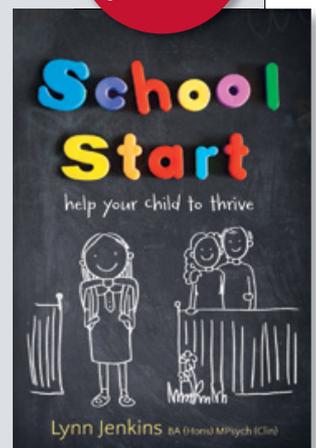
Here are his top eight tips:

- 1. Be there for your child.** The single most important factor in a child's life is the parent or caregiver providing a secure base, comfort, empathy and advice (for example, reminding your child that it's normal to feel nervous).
- 2. Address specific worries.** Emphasise the positive things about school, but be aware that there might be specific issues

## Stressed about starting school?

advice for parents

If you're feeling anxious about your little one starting school, this ebook might help reassure you. *School Start: help your child to thrive* is by Lynn Jenkins, a clinical psychologist with a background in mental health and community counselling. She's a passionate writer who aims at helping women feel confident in their ability to raise happy, healthy kids. The book covers a bunch of topics – including anxiety, bullying, initiating friendships and how to cope when things go wrong – and provides families with tools and advice to ensure their kids are emotionally ready to face the classroom.



The eBook *School Start: help your child to thrive*, by Lynn Jenkins, is \$4.99 from [exislepublishing.com.au](http://exislepublishing.com.au)

Thinkstock image

that need addressing, such as bullying.

**3. Relax with your child.** Teach your child to take deep breaths, relax or meditate, as a way of calming oneself and dealing with stressors.

**4. Maintain healthy routines.** Make sure your child gets enough sleep and has a healthy diet. Also make sure there's time for creativity, unstructured play and being in nature. Make time for love and laughter.

**5. Encourage independence but be the parent.** Encourage ownership of decisions, as much as your child shows capacity for that, but also show that maintaining healthy routines and preparing for school are "family affairs". In other words, have expectations and role-model good practices, while encouraging autonomy.

**6. Start doing "school work" with your child ahead of**



**school.** Upon a long break, or if starting school for the first time, it's useful to ease the transition between holiday and school mode by doing school-related work (such as reading with or to your child). There are also many good children's books about starting or going back to school.

**7. Network.** Talk to the school and the teachers and find out about expectations, homework, etc. The more synergy between home and school, the easier the transition.

**8. Be organised and assign importance to tasks.**

For example:

- Use a wall calendar to show important dates.
- Write down need-to-know info (locker code, class numbers, etc).
- Organise homework, books, backpack, before school starts.
- Set up a time and place for homework away from the TV.
- Organise after-school plans.
- Have a negotiated emergency or sick-day plan in place.

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## School bag must-haves

Tick a few things off your shopping list with these back-to-school basics.

Jack + Jimeale  
Back 2 School Pack  
\$10  
Target



12 pack coloured  
ballpoint pens  
\$9.95  
Smiggle

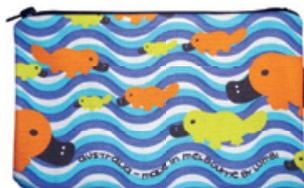


Lynx Calculus Senior  
\$89.99



Williams COC and  
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Platypus Fun pencil case  
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[lumbi.com.au](http://lumbi.com.au)





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