



By Perla Audain

BACK TO SCHOOL DURING THE PANDEMIC

I look back with fondness at the days when my children were in grade school. The very first day of each school year exuded an excitement that could vividly be seen through their eyes. Laughter would fill the air as they rushed to put on their freshly-pressed uniforms. There were lots of comments about who they would see at the bus stops and how they would react to meeting their new teachers. During those days, my biggest responsibility was to ensure that my children were fully equipped—book bags and all, with the materials they needed to have a successful learning experience.

This year, due to the Corona virus pandemic, many parents, caregivers, and guardians face new and difficult challenges which require them to make choices about how their children will safely return to school in the fall. Some are choosing in-person learning in the schools, some are choosing virtual learning at home, and some are choosing a hybrid model, which is a combination of in-person and virtual learning. If you are among those attempting to make this important decision, here are five back-to-school safety tips that may help:

1. **Reinforce** everyday precautions such as hand washing, physical distancing and wearing a mask
2. Make sure that your child's school **is adhering to recommendations** set forth by The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and public health officials.
3. **Listen to your child's** concerns. Try to be as available and prepared as possible.
4. Make sure your child remains healthy by scheduling **an annual wellness exam**.
5. Let your **parental instincts guide you**. Also, lean on God and the wisdom of others.

Ultimately, remember that God will take care of your child just as He takes care of the sparrow.

"And the very hairs on your head are all numbered. So don't be afraid; you are more valuable to God than a whole flock of sparrows" (Luke 12:7, NLT)