

Activity Worksheets

The following activities are designed to help students begin the year with intention, strengthen coping skills, and build confidence for navigating challenges. Each worksheet can be used on its own or paired with classroom lessons, counseling sessions, or family conversations—sparking reflection, connection, and resilience as the school year unfolds.

 New Year, Fresh Start: The Backpack Activity

 "What's In My Coping Toolbox?"

 3-2-1: My Back-to-School Reflection

 "What If...?" Scenarios

 My Daily Recharge Plan

 Connection Cards

Activity

New Year, Fresh Start: The Backpack Activity

Starting a new school year is the perfect time to reflect on what we want to carry forward and what we're ready to leave behind. This simple activity helps students think about their hopes and goals while letting go of things that no longer serve them.

How to use this activity

Write or draw in and around each backpack—what you want to leave behind from last year, and what you want to take with you or start fresh this year. Examples might include leaving behind a worry or trying something new this school year. If you're a grown-up supporting students, consider completing your own backpack activity and then sharing your answers.



Things I am leaving behind



Things I am taking with me

Activity

"What's In My Coping Toolbox?"

How to use this activity

Circle the coping strategies that help you feel better when you're feeling stressed, anxious, angry, or overwhelmed. Add your own ideas on the blank lines, and remember—you always have these tools in your coping toolbox, ready to use anytime you need them.

Coping Tool Menu

 Deep breaths	 Thinking of something funny
 Listening to music	 Talking to a trusted adult
 Drawing or coloring	 Positive self-talk
 Reading a book	 Reframing thoughts <i>("It's hard now, but I'll get through it")</i>
 Doing a puzzle	 Making a to-do list to organize your thoughts
 Petting an animal	 5-4-3-2-1 grounding (5 things you can see...)
 Writing in a journal	 Naming 3 things you're grateful for
 Getting a drink of water	 Add your own:
 Taking a walk	_____
 Holding a fidget toy or stuffed animal	_____
 Talking to a friend	_____
 Finding a quiet space	_____
 Stretching or moving around	_____

Activity

3-2-1: My Back-to-School Reflection

How to use this activity

As you start the new school year, take a few minutes to reflect on what you're looking forward to, what you want to work on, and who can support you along the way. There are no right or wrong answers—just what's true for you!

If you're a grown-up supporting students, take a moment to complete your own back-to-school reflection. Consider sharing and comparing your answers as a way to build connection.

3

3 Hopes I Have for This School Year Are...

These could be about friendships, learning something new, having fun, trying something brave, or anything else important to you.

2

2 Goals I Want to Work Toward Are...

These could be related to school, activities, friends, or family.

1

When I need support, one person (or place) I can turn to is...

Think of someone you trust—like a friend, teacher, counselor, coach, or family member. It could also be a calming space or resource at school or outside of school. Share a bit about what you chose and why.

"What If...?" Scenarios

How to use this activity

As a new school year begins, it's normal for unexpected things to happen. Learning to think ahead can help you feel more ready and confident, not just at the start of school, but all year long.

Write down what you might do, say, or try for each scenario below, or come up with your own "What if...?" scenarios. There's no right or wrong answer—just what you think might help!

Scenarios

1. What if I forget my homework?



I could... _____

2. What if I don't have anyone to sit with at lunch?



I could... _____

3. What if I don't know the answer or make a mistake in front of the class?



I could... _____

4. What if I'm nervous about taking a test?



I could... _____

5. What if I feel left out?



I could... _____

Create your own

Try coming up with your scenarios. Think about both negative and positive things that could happen!

1. What if _____?



I could... _____

2. What if _____?



I could... _____

3. What if _____?



I could... _____

4. What if _____?



I could... _____

5. What if _____?



I could... _____



Why this helps:

When you practice how to handle moments ahead of time, your brain feels more prepared and your body feels calmer. It's a great way to build confidence and remind yourself that you have choices—even when things don't go as planned, and that good things can happen!

My Daily Recharge Plan

How to use this activity

Taking care of yourself every day helps your brain, body, and feelings stay in balance. Let's make a plan for how you can recharge throughout the day!



In the morning, I can energize myself by...

Choose one or more things that help you feel awake, focused, and ready for the day.

Examples: Eating breakfast, doing some stretches, listening to music, packing my backpack the night before.



At school, I'll take care of myself by...

Think about what helps you stay calm, focused, and confident at school.

Examples: Taking deep breaths, using a fidget tool, asking for help, using kind self-talk, talking to a friend.



After school, I can relax or recharge by...

What helps you unwind or reset after a busy day?

Examples: Going outside, reading, playing with a pet, journaling, having a snack, talking with someone I trust.



Before bed, I can wind down by...

What helps your brain and body get ready for sleep?

Examples: Turning off screens, taking a warm shower, reading a book, thinking of something good from the day.



Why this helps:

Making time to recharge helps you feel more focused, less stressed, and more ready to take on each new day. Your plan can change as you learn what feels best. You may need different things at different times of the year—try things out and see what works best for you! If you're a grown-up supporting students, create your own daily recharge plan because you matter too!

Activity

Connection Cards

A simple way to check in, share something important, or brighten someone's day.

How to use this activity

Use these little note cards to leave a kind, funny, or encouraging message for your kid or teen. Slip them into a lunchbox, backpack, or pillow—or share them with your child so they can leave messages for you! Small notes can spark connection and make everyday moments feel special.

 To: From:	 To: From:
 To: From:	 To: From:
 To: From:	 To: From:



Tip: These notecards can be a great way to ease back-to-school transitions and stay connected all year long—whether it's the first week of school, a tough day, or a moment worth celebrating.