



Natural Learning Concepts

<http://www.nlconcepts.com>

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Moving up to the next grade

Good morning. No, this is not your class room anymore. I'm sorry but you're not allowed to be here. Do you see that person over there surrounded by children you don't know? She is your new teacher and those will be your new friends. Please go with them. That is where you belong. I know you want to be here. I'm sorry, you're a special person but now I have new students and you can't stay with us.

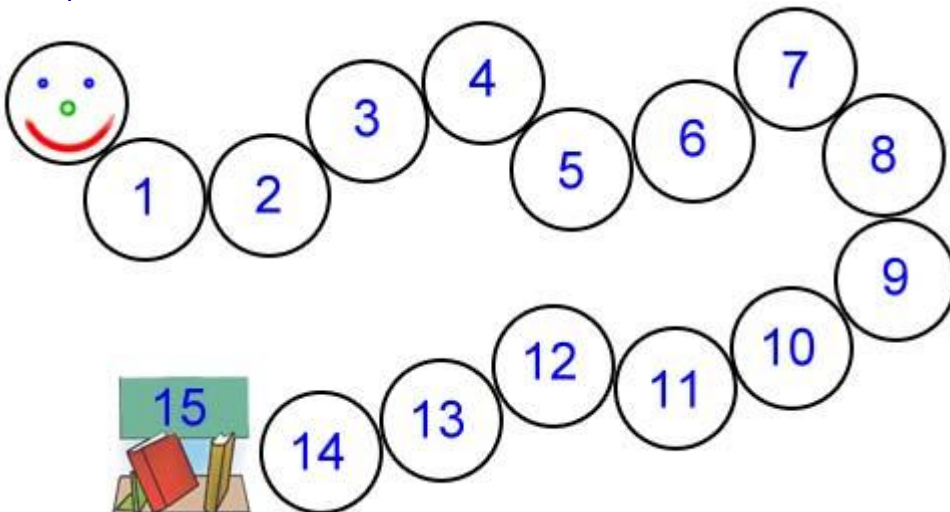
Moving up a grade can be a daunting experience to someone with autism!

Vacation has been great! The weather has been beautiful. The kids have had fun. There have been no school meetings and no homework struggles. Now it's time to prepare for the new school year and you are overwhelmed with your task list. There is stationery to purchase, pencils to sharpen, new school bags to buy and you need to rearrange your entire schedule.

People with autism are feeling overwhelmed too. We know how much you have on your plate so we've prepared some time saving strategies for you to help your child transition to the next grade.

Step One

Make a count down caterpillar. We recommend you begin this at least 2 weeks before school begins. Each day let your child cross off a number. This will visually show your child how long it will be until the first day of school.



Step 2

Find out the name of your child's new teacher. Speak to your child about the new teacher often. If you can meet the teacher before school begins, that's great. If that's not possible, request a phone call from the teacher before the school year begins. If she is unavailable, see if you can get a photo that you can show to your child. If that's out the question, try and get information such as her hair and eye color. The more information your child has about his new teacher, the easier the transition will be.



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Step 3

Write a social story. Here are a few suggestions to add to your story:

Vacation is so much fun. I really enjoy going to _____
School begins on _____
I am going to _____ grade.
My teacher knows all about me and can't wait to meet me. Her name is _____
I might know some friends in my class but I will also make new friends.
I can't wait for _____ (library, gym, reading... whatever your child enjoys)
It's good to go to school because I get to learn and play with my friends.

Step 4

Pair school with something good. Think of little things he likes. Let your child know that on the first day back at school he will get a _____ (example: action figure, book or something he likes). The first day that homework begins, he will get a _____
Create a calendar or mark these days on your existing calendar and remind your child about these exciting rewards.

Step 5

Let your child know that his thoughts are perfectly normal. It's completely OK to feel excited/concerned/fearful or whatever it is that your child is feeling. If your child is unable to express emotions, simply tell him that whatever he thinks and feels is perfect, that you love him and will always be there to help.

- By Jene Aviram

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