

## The Back to School Superheroes

Once upon a time there was a little girl called Annie. She was a very special little girl with a very special job. She was a superhero. A real-life, Stay Home Superhero!

One day she heard that because Stay Home Superheroes all around the world had been doing such a good job of staying at home, the Big Problem was getting smaller and smaller. This was great news! Their superpowers were working! Did this mean she could go and see her friends and her grandparents again? She hoped so. She was missing them SO much. She went to ask her daddy.

“Soon it will be time to see everyone again, but first, there’s a brand-new superhero mission to complete!” he explained.

“A brand-new mission? What is it?” asked Annie.

“Well, the world had to close down for a little while to help shrink the Big Problem, but now it’s time to start opening it back up again! We can’t do it all at once, it has to be little by little so that the Problem keeps getting smaller. We need some superhero help, so you are going to become a Back to School Superhero!” said daddy.

Annie felt excited, then nervous, then excited again. She really wanted to go back to school and see all her friends, but she felt a little scared too. It had been such a long time. And the Big Problem was getting smaller, but it wasn’t completely gone yet... Was it really safe to go back?

Her daddy explained that all the teachers had been working extra hard to get the school ready.

“They have made lots of changes to help all you Back to School Superheroes complete your missions safely.” He said.

“What kind of changes?” asked Annie.

Her daddy sat down with her and explained that they had got lots of Superhero Soap ready for all the extra hand washing and that all the classrooms had been transformed into special Superhero Headquarters!

“You’re going to be put into special teams for this mission, so you might not be with all of your friends, and you might have a different teacher too.” Daddy explained.

But that wasn’t fair! Annie wanted to be back with all her friends and her teacher, just like before.

“I know it might seem strange. But each team needs to stay inside a special protective bubble, and the bubbles can’t fit whole classes inside just yet. But it won’t be like that forever. It’s just until the Big Problem gets even smaller and the bubbles get even bigger,” said Daddy.

“Bubbles? Do you mean like superhero forcefields?”

“Yes! Just like that. Your bubble will be invisible, but still super strong.”



Annie felt very proud that she was going to be a Back to School Superhero. She was excited to see her new classroom headquarters and to try out her brand-new superhero bubble. She was still nervous, but she knew she'd had lots of practice at being brave and coping with big changes as a Stay Home Superhero. Annie knew she could use her superpowers to take on this next mission too.

So after weeks and weeks of staying at home, she finally went back to school! Annie loved being back, learning and having fun, but her daddy was right, lots of things were different to before.

There weren't many tables and chairs and lots of things had been packed away. They all had their very own special set of pencils and pens and they weren't allowed to share. They didn't have big assemblies or eat their lunch together in the hall and there were lots of stickers on the floor to show them where to go too.

Sometimes all the changes and the long list of new rules made Annie feel worried and frustrated too. She wished things could be like before. She wished she could hug her teacher and share her pencils and sit right next to her very best friend. She wished she could eat hot dinners in the big hall and be back in her old classroom.

Everyone felt the same the same as Annie, even her teacher! They all missed things being like they were before, and they all felt sad and grumpy and worried sometimes too. This just meant they had to take extra special care of each other. They used their superpowers to be extra kind and show how much they cared about each other, even from a distance. They wrote letters, drew pictures and found new creative ways to play and learn together while staying apart.

Annie and her superhero friends worked and played in their bubbles each day. And although lots of things were different, lots of things stayed the same too. School was still a happy, safe place to be. There were still always grownups there to help. There were still friends to play with and talk to. There was still lots of laughter and lots of learning. And they were all still superheroes, working together to help to save the world.



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