Bedrock Therapies

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Parent Guide: 5 Practical Ways to Support Your Teen During School Transitions

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Introduction

School transitions can be overwhelming for teens — and just as nerve-wracking for parents who want to help but aren't sure how. This guide offers five practical, therapist-recommended strategies you can use right away to help your teen navigate change with confidence and resilience.

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1. Emotional Check-In Script

Teens often hide their struggles, so gentle, non-judgmental check-ins can make a big difference. Use these openers:

- "What's been the hardest part of your week so far?"
- "When did you feel proud of yourself this week?"
- "If you could change one thing about school right now, what would it be?"
  Remember: listen more than you speak, and resist the urge to immediately fix or advise.

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2. Weekly Resilience-Building Family Activity

Pick one night a week for a family connection ritual:

- Share "one win and one challenge" from the week

- Go for a 20-minute walk together (phones off!)

- Cook or bake something as a team
  These simple activities reinforce a sense of safety and belonging.

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3. Quick Mindfulness Exercise

Help your teen learn to calm their body and mind:

- **STOP technique: St**op, **T**ake a smooth deep breath, **O**bserve your body(gentle body scan), **P**roceed–go back to what you were doing or were anxious about doing.
- **Box Breathing:** Inhale for 4 seconds, hold for 4, exhale for 4, hold for 4. Repeat 4 times.

- **5-4-3-2-1 Grounding:** Name 5 things you see, 4 things you feel, 3 things you hear, 2 things you smell, 1 thing you taste.
  Practice together when calm, so they're ready to use it when stressed. <u>This is great to use in Nature, which we do each session at bedrocktherapies outdoor sessions.</u>
- **RAIN**: **R**ecognize–how you are feeling internally, **A**llow the feelings to show up–try not to numb, **I**nvestigate—can you be curious towards what's happening internally? **N**urture yourself, provide kindness towards the emotions and the body parts they are showing up in.

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4. Supportive Phrases That Help

Instead of:

- "Just get over it."

Try:

- "That sounds really tough. I'm here for you."
- "That makes sense, can you tell me more about that?"

Instead of:

- "You're overreacting."

Try:

- “Your feelings are valid. Let’s work through this together.”
- “It makes sense you feel this way, can you tell me where you're stuck?”

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5. Resource List

- **Articles & Books:** Check the Bedrock Therapies blog for related topics.
- **Professional Support:** Contact us to explore individual, family, or group therapy options. Feeling good together.
- **Emergency Resources:** If your teen is in crisis, don’t wait — reach out to your local mental health helpline or school counselor.

Final Reminder

You don’t have to be a perfect parent to make a difference — just a present, caring one. Small, consistent actions build the foundation your teen needs to thrive.

Want personalized support? Contact Bedrock Therapies to schedule a consultation today.