

The 10-Minute Back-to-School Checklist

You will not do all seven conversations this week. Do these ten things instead. Every one is free, and every one moves the needle.

- ☐ **Phones out of bedrooms overnight — starting tonight.**
The single highest-return change any family can make. Sleep protects everything else. Buy a cheap alarm clock and put the charger in the kitchen.
- ☐ **Say the "you will not be in trouble" sentence out loud.**
Before anything happens. This one sentence is what predators and dealers are counting on you never saying.
- ☐ **Ask what apps they're actually on — with genuine curiosity, not a raid.**
Including AI companion apps. You cannot protect them from a platform you've never heard of.
- ☐ **Get naloxone (Narcan) and put it where your family can find it.**
Available at Florida pharmacies without a prescription. You hope to never use it.
- ☐ **Lock up prescription medication. Count what's there.**
Most teen prescription misuse starts in a home medicine cabinet.
- ☐ **Put 988 in your phone and in your child's phone.**
Suicide & Crisis Lifeline — call or text, free, 24/7. Do it tonight, not in a crisis.
- ☐ **Name one other trusted adult for your kid — and tell that adult.**
A coach, aunt, youth pastor, neighbor. The research is overwhelming: one steady adult outside the home changes outcomes.
- ☐ **Get them into one in-person activity by October.**
Team, job, youth group, theater, church, volunteer shift. It doesn't matter which. It matters that it's real and recurring.
- ☐ **Protect one screen-free family meal per week and defend it.**
Not seven. One. Put it on the calendar like a doctor's appointment.
- ☐ **Ask one hard question this week — and then be quiet.**
The silence after the question is where the answer lives. Do not fill it.

One last thing. You will get some of this wrong. Every parent does. What your child will remember is not whether you handled it perfectly — it's whether you showed up and stayed. That's the whole job. You're already doing it.