

The First 10 Minutes

5 After-School Reset Cards

The school bag hits the floor before hello does. One shoe is off, the jacket is half on, and something small (a wrapper, a shoelace, a forgotten library book) is suddenly the biggest problem in the world.

It isn't about the wrapper. It's about the ten minutes it takes to put down what they've been building up, and holding on to, all day.

These five cards meet your child in that window: one scenario, one script, ready when you need it.

1

The Front Door Reset

The moment:

Bag drops, shoes come off, and before you've said a word, something small is already wrong.

What you do:

Skip the questions for the first five minutes. Let them move, get a drink, sit somewhere soft, before anything gets asked.

Say:

"Grab a drink first. We'll talk when you're ready."

The questions can wait; the body needs to land first.

2

The Snack Table Flashpoint

The moment:

The wrapper won't open, the crust is touching the other food, and suddenly it's a crisis.

What you do:

Deal with the object, not the reaction. Open the wrapper, swap the plate, move on without narrating it.

Say:

"Here, let me get that. All sorted."

The wrapper was never the problem; it was just the part that gave way first.

3

The Car Ride Window

The moment:

Silence the whole drive, or a running commentary about something that happened three hours ago.

What you do:

Let the car do the work. No eye contact required, no performance of listening, just drive and leave space.

Say:

"You don't have to tell me anything yet."

A child who has been watched all day doesn't need to be watched on the way home too.

4

The Homework Stall

The moment:

The bag stays zipped. There's a sudden need for a snack, the bathroom, a very important conversation about the dog.

What you do:

Separate the stall from the subject. Give ten minutes of nothing first, then sit down together before opening anything.

Say:

"Ten minutes off, then we sit down together."

The stalling isn't about the homework; it's about not having anything left to start it with.

5

The Bedtime Spillover

The moment:

The day catches up at the worst possible time, over teeth brushing, over which pyjamas, over nothing at all.

What you do:

Treat it as the day finally arriving, not a bedtime problem. Slow down, sit on the edge of the bed, let it come out.

Say:

"Looks like today's still in there. Want to let it out?"

This isn't a bedtime tantrum; it's the same ten minutes, just showing up late.

A note for you:

You won't catch every one of these moments, and you don't need to. Pick the card that matches tonight and use that one.

From the team at Tricky Brains

Helping children build confident, calm and curious minds.