



# Coffee with the Counselors

Supporting your student's transition back to school

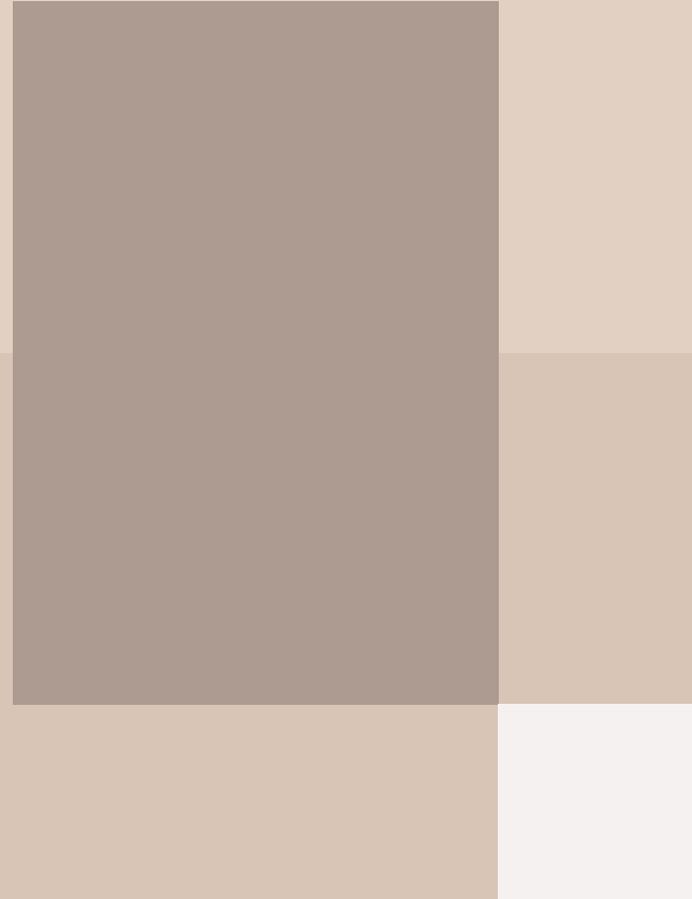


Brooklyn Winters, Kristen Stephenson, and Brenna Tripp

## Normal Reactions to Transitions and New Situations

- Excitement, nervousness, and even possible anxiety are extremely common reactions to new situations, deadlines and things that are important to us.
- These feelings can become more intense if avoided.
- In general, teenagers are likely to experience major mood swings.
- How we react to those emotions makes a difference in how you manage those emotions daily and their ability to be self-sufficient.

How to help your  
student prepare for a  
successful school year



# Habits and Rituals

- Pick out clothes the night before school
- Make sure to have a plan for packing lunch the night before or in the morning- know what will be packed in advance
- Wake up a little early and eat a good breakfast and do something relaxing
- Plan calming after school time- keep in mind, for some this may be quiet time, others may need to chat with family and friends to process. Don't push one way or the other.

## Habits and Rituals (Cont.)

- Teenagers should get at least 8 hours of sleep. Be sure that phones and other technology are put away 30 minutes to an hour before bedtime.
- GET OUTSIDE! Research is clear that just 15 minutes of nature can shift our attention outward and tame negative emotions. Encourage daily walks when possible.

## Have your student talk to you about their day

- Keep in mind that students may be more tired than usual the first weeks while processing being back on a schedule with new classes, new teachers, expectations, environments, and information. This is okay and very normal.
- Affirm anxious feelings, but keep a “can do it” attitude. (Things are hard/stressful right now but I know you can get through it!)

## Have your student talk to you about their day

- Some may feel settled the first couple of days of school, others may take the first couple of weeks. This is okay and normal.
- Remind students of in school resources and encourage them to email or chat (i.e. student mentor, School Counselor or teacher).
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- They may not want to talk right after school but need some quiet time right afterwards and be more open later in the evening.

## Help your student ensure they start strong with homework habits.

- Be sure they have a quiet place to do homework without distractions. Be sure the phone is put away during homework time. If a student has had a habit of getting behind on work, the homework location may be best near a parent for awhile.
- Helping students plan their time and manage deadlines will prevent ongoing stress and anxiety.

## Help your student ensure they start strong with homework habits.

- Be sure your student is using an agenda for deadlines and tracking completion of work. Let them use their preferred method, but have them show you and check in to see how it's going weekly at first.
- Check Powerschool together. Have them login and show you. Sunday evening may be a good time.
- It's okay if it takes a couple of weeks to get into a routine or habits.

## Have 2 - 3 strategies in place for overwhelming moments.

- Focus on their art.
- Try the “Taming Anxiety Meditation Challenge” which is free or other meditation apps.
- Find a place to yell, scream or cry for 5 - 10 minutes. The release of emotion may be just what is needed to reset.
- Set everything aside for 10 - 30 minutes and listen to music, take a walk, chat with a friend or play with a pet. If at school, request to see the School Counselor who can help reset or work through the problem.

We are here for both you and your student to help navigate this transition and offer our support throughout the school year!

Please reach out with any questions or concerns.

- Mrs. Brooklyn Winters- Dean of Students, 12th grade counselor
- Ms. Kristen Stephenson- Last names A-J 9th-11th grade counselor
- Mrs. Brenna Tripp- Last names K-Z 9th- 11th grade counselor