



## The First & Last 10 Seconds Parent Connection Card

A simple daily tool to help parents build trust, emotional safety, and stronger bonds with their children and teens. Small daily moments that help children and teens feel seen, heard, safe, and loved.

Section 1: Why the First & Last 10 Seconds Matter: The first and last moments of an interaction can shape how a child feels about coming to you.

Before school.  
After school.  
Before they leave home.  
When they return home.  
Before bedtime.  
After a hard day.

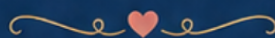
These moments quietly say:

“I see you.”

“You matter.”

“You are safe with me.”

“I am here when you need to talk.”





## Section 2: The First 10 Seconds

When your child or teen enters the room, car, or home:

- Pause what you are doing.
- Look at their face.
- Smile gently.
- Say their name warmly.
- Use a calm voice.
- Notice their mood before asking questions.
- Make the moment feel safe, not rushed.

Make sure to tell them:

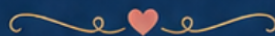
“Hey sweetheart, I’m glad to see you.”

“I missed you today.”

“How’s your heart?”

“You don’t have to talk yet. I’m just glad you’re here.”

“I’m proud of you for making it through today.”





### Section 3: The Last 10 Seconds

Before they leave, go to school, get out of the car,  
go to practice, or head to bed:

- Speak peace over them.
- Avoid ending with criticism.
- Give encouragement.
- Offer affection if they receive it.
- Remind them they can come to you.
- End with connection, not correction.

Make sure that they know:

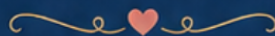
“I love you. Have a good day.”

“You’ve got this.”

“I’m here if you need me.”

“Make wise choices. I believe in you.”

“No matter what happens today, you can talk to me.”





Section 4: Avoid These in the First or Last 10 Seconds  
Try not to start or end with:

☐ “Why didn’t you...”

☐ “You always...”

☐ “Hurry up!”

☐ “What’s wrong with you?”

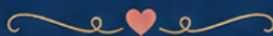
☐ Immediate criticism

☐ Phone distraction

☐ Interrogation

☐ Comparing them to someone else

Correction can still happen, but connection should come first when possible.





Section 5: Tiny Daily Reflection  
Today I noticed my child/teen seemed:

Happy

Tired

Quiet

Stressed

Angry

Sad

Excited

Disconnected

Needing extra love

One thing I can do tomorrow to connect better:

Strong relationships are built in small repeated moments.  
Ten seconds of warmth today may become the doorway to an honest conversation later.

