

Is your young adult prepared for life after school?

A practical reflection guide for parents supporting the transition into higher education, work and adulthood

LIFE AFTER SCHOOL

A new chapter begins

Leaving school brings more than a change of place. Young people enter environments with new expectations, more freedom and greater responsibility.

This guide helps parents pause and consider the inner capabilities their young person may need to manage that transition well.

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What changes after school?

01	STRUCTURE	Fewer reminders and more responsibility for time, deadlines and choices
02	BELONGING	New social groups, cultures and expectations to understand
03	PERFORMANCE	Different standards in study, training and the workplace
04	INDEPENDENCE	More decisions with consequences that may feel unfamiliar

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A wider world of influence

Digital access can expand learning, connection and opportunity. It can also bring constant comparison, distraction and pressure.

Young people must learn how to make sound decisions while many voices compete for their attention.

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Expectations meet reality

What many young people value

Flexibility and some control over how they learn or work
Fast, intuitive technology
Purpose, fairness and transparency
Belonging and genuine inclusion

What the environment may require

Following systems they did not design
Patience with slower processes
Working with different generations and viewpoints
Consistency even when motivation is low

The gap between the two can become a valuable learning space when young people have guidance and room to reflect.

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When the gap feels too wide

1 Performance may decline

Missed deadlines, uneven effort or difficulty adapting

2 Engagement can weaken

Withdrawal from learning, training or workplace relationships

3 Self-doubt may grow

A setback begins to feel like proof that they are not capable

4 Young people may leave too soon

An early exit may interrupt progress before support can take effect

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Strengths worth building on

Young adults often bring curiosity, confidence with technology and openness to new ideas. Many also care deeply about fairness and authentic relationships.

When these strengths are paired with self-awareness, resilience and accountability, young people can adapt without losing their sense of who they are.



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A pause for reflection

Preparation begins with honest questions, not perfect answers.

The next pages invite you to notice what your young person may need, and what support you can realistically offer.

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Your concerns

What concerns or fears arise when you think about your young person’s next chapter?

01

Name the concern as specifically as you can. Then ask:

What evidence supports this concern?
What belongs to my young person, and what belongs to me?
What conversation would be more useful than another warning?

Identity and character

Which beliefs, values and everyday behaviours will help your young person become a grounded adult?

- What do they believe about themselves?
- How do they respond when things go wrong?
- Can they take responsibility without losing confidence?
- Do their daily choices reflect the values they speak about?



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The support around them

A strong support system does not remove every difficulty. It gives a young person trusted places to think, ask for perspective and recover after setbacks.

Who can offer a listening ear, practical guidance or an honest challenge? Consider family members, educators, role models, mentors, counsellors and community networks.

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Whole-person wellbeing

Which practices could help your young person care for their wellbeing during demanding transitions?

PHYSICAL

Rest, movement, nourishment and healthy routines

EMOTIONAL

Naming feelings, regulating reactions and asking for help

MENTAL

Managing attention, pressure and unhelpful self-talk

SPIRITUAL

Meaning, values, faith or practices that create grounding

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The adult they are becoming

Picture your young adult several years from now

How would you like them to treat themselves, the people they love and those who depend on them?

Which values would you hope they carry into their own home, workplace and community?

Your hopes can guide the conversations and examples you offer today.

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The influence they may have

What kind of presence would you like your young person to be in the lives of others?

Consider how they might contribute through their character, choices, relationships and work.

Impact often grows through small, consistent actions long before it becomes visible as success.

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Practical ways parents can help

1	**Create space for honest conversation**	Listen for understanding before offering a solution.
2	**Share responsibility gradually**	Let them practise choices while support is still close.
3	**Connect them to wider support**	Mentors, role models and professional resources can add perspective.
4	**Notice growth, not only results**	Recognise reflection, effort, recovery and responsible choices.



The next step can begin with one good conversation

Selani Services works alongside young people, parents and existing support structures to strengthen the human capabilities needed to enter, navigate and grow through life’s transitions.

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