Morning Meltdowns

> *We have all been there: rushing to the gates, feeling awful after a morning of shouting and nagging, or dreading yet another late arrival. Here is how to make mornings a bit more bearable.*

Build a routine that works

Sit down together and list everything that needs to happen each morning: breakfast, getting dressed, teeth, shoes. Once you have the list, decide the best order. Sometimes shaking things up breaks bad habits, though be cautious if your child finds change difficult.

Make it visual

Turning the list into a chart children can refer to helps them take responsibility for what happens next. Charts with photos of each child doing the task work especially well; seeing themselves doing it helps them follow through. Ticking off completed jobs, alongside plenty of praise, keeps motivation up.

Manage technology

Consider a “no screens before school” rule so you are not prising devices away at the last minute. If that feels like too much, try “when you're dressed and your teeth are clean, then you can have some tablet time,” but plan ahead for how you will get them to stop when it is time to leave.

Build in extra time

Getting up just fifteen minutes earlier can make a surprising difference when it comes to unexpected hiccups like a lost library book or a spilt drink. Build a little leeway into the timetable for the unexpected.