SHANE LYNCH PSYCHOLOGY

Jane App Launch

Below is the link for the Jane App where you can create your profile, complete my updated paperwork and access my online booking schedule for appointments this fall.

Schedule an Appointment

Click the link below to be redirected to my online scheduler.

Book an Appointment

Jane App Link

You may wish to access to your profile for appointments, receipts, etc. with your phone. Click the link below to be redirected to the Jane App for iOS or Android.

Jane App

About Shane

I've always felt like September was the beginning of a new year. Maybe I was just in school too long...



Navigating Back-to-School

As summer winds down, so does its loose, unstructured rhythm. Within the wind down comes a shift that's bigger than a new backpack and school supplies. The move from summer to fall asks children to re-adapt to schedules, social demands, and academic expectations all at once. Understanding what's developmentally normal at each stage can help you respond with patience instead of worry or frustration.

Early and middle childhood (Ages 5-10).

Separation and routine anxiety. Young children's sense of security is closely tied to predictable routines and attachment figures. A summer without the school schedule can temporarily loosen that structure, so mild anxiety about drop-off or new teachers is common and typically resolves within a few weeks.

Concrete, black-and-white thinking. Children in this stage are still developing the cognitive flexibility to handle ambiguity, so unclear expectations ("what will my new class be like?") can feel more distressing than they would to an older child.

Social skill recalibration. Peer relationships at this age are practiced through direct, guided experience. After a summer with



Tips for Dads & Moms

Across all ages, the through-line is the same: transitions are effortful because they ask the nervous system to re-learn safety in a new routine.

Patience, predictability, and open conversation – tailored to your child's developmental stage – go a long way toward making the re-learning process smoother for the whole family.

Remember to be curious about your child's experience not presumptive. Be interested, not busy. Be open to their interpretation of what school means to them, not prescriptive of how you think it "should" be interpreted. Keep it about them and press pause on the "when I was a kid" shtick. And always remind them you're proud of them, just for being them!



practiced through direct, *guided* experience. After a summer with less peer contact, some renegotiation of friendships and social roles in the first weeks of school is developmentally typical.

What helps: Talking through concrete details (what the day will look like, who will be there) reduces uncertainty.

Middle School (Ages 11–13).

Heightened self-consciousness. Emerging capacity for abstract thought includes a new, sometimes uncomfortable awareness of how others perceive them. This is often described as an "imaginary audience" effect. They think everything they do or say is done on a stage in front of all their watching peers.

Increased sensitivity to peer status. Social comparison and peer belonging become significantly more central to self-esteem during this period, making questions of fitting in feel especially weighty at the start of a new year.

Emotional volatility tied to brain development. The adolescent brain's emotional-response systems mature ahead of its regulatory systems. This can produce mood swings that are neurologically typical rather than behavioural choices. It's sounds good to tell our kids "make good choices" but it's pretty hard for them, especially when dysregulated.

What helps: Low-pressure check-ins (side-by-side, like in the car) tend to open communication better than direct questioning, and validating social worries without minimizing them supports emotional regulation.

High School (Ages 14–18)

Identity exploration and future orientation. Older teens are actively working through questions of identity, values, and future goals. Back-to-school stress (course loads, post-secondary pressure) can intensify this identity-creating process.

Autonomy-seeking alongside continued need for support. Teens push for independence while still relying on caregivers for guidance. You'll see this showing up as resistance to parental involvement in school matters.

Sleep and stress vulnerability. Adolescents have a biologically shifted circadian rhythm making early school start times a genuine physiological challenge. This effects mood and academic performance. Don't assume this is a discipline issue.

What helps: Collaborative rather than directive conversations about schedules and responsibilities support the autonomy teens need. Protecting sleep, even a modest 30-minute earlier wind-down, meaningfully buffers back-to-school stress.