



Supporting Your Child Through the Last Weeks of School Term

Support Their Nervous System Now, Not Just Later

1. **Lower the bar at home.** School is already asking a lot of them, so evenings and weekends don't need to add more on top. Skip the extra worksheets and the last-minute projects. Getting through these final weeks with something left in the tank is the actual win here.
2. **Let them retreat when they need to.** By the last stretch of term, kids are often running on empty by 3pm. If they come home and disappear into their room, or zone out with a screen, that's their body asking for recovery, not something to worry about.
3. **Reach for sensory input they already trust.** Weighted blankets, dim lighting, a favourite texture, water play, playdough. The goal is familiar and repetitive, not new or exciting.
4. **Give them somewhere to land.** A soft, quiet corner with headphones or fidgets gives them a spot to decompress the moment they walk in the door, without needing to ask for it.
5. **Let them lead playtime completely.** After a day of following instructions, having zero direction from you is often exactly what they need.
6. **Build in movement that's just for fun.** A bounce on the trampoline, a slow bike ride, running through the sprinkler. No goal attached, nothing to get right.
7. **Try temperature to help them come down.** A cool bath or a warm wheat bag before bed can settle a system that's been switched on all day.
8. **Warn before transitions, more than usual.** Fatigue makes shifts between activities harder to handle. "Five more minutes, then we leave for school" gives them time to brace for it.
9. **Regulate alongside them in quiet moments.** Blow pinwheels together, do slow animal walks, or just lie on the floor side by side. Small, wordless moments like this matter more now than they did earlier in term.



Make Room for What They're Feeling

10. **Say out loud that the tiredness makes sense.** "These last few weeks are a lot. You're doing so many hard things, and that's why you feel worn out." Being understood often brings more relief than any fix.
11. **Dial back praise tied to performance.** This is a good stretch to lean into connection instead. "I'm glad we get this time together" says more than "how did the test go?"
12. **Offer a way to express what's building up without needing words for it.** Drawing, clay, open-ended art. Feelings that are hard to explain often come out more easily this way.
13. **Trim the calendar rather than adding to it.** If school events, assessments, or performances are already filling the week, this isn't the time to say yes to more.
14. **Name the goodbyes coming up.** Leaving a teacher, a routine, or a class behind for the year is a real transition, even for younger kids, and it helps to acknowledge it before it happens.
15. **Let quiet be the answer sometimes.** Depleted kids often go quieter, not louder. Sitting with them can land better than asking what's wrong.
16. **Keep the small stuff the same.** Same breakfast, same drive to school, same story before bed. Sameness feels steady when everything else is winding down.
17. **Expect less patience with siblings.** Tiredness at the end of term often shows up as friction at home. A bit of separate space for each child can head off some of it.
18. **Reach for a comparison they already understand.** "A phone runs low on battery by the end of the day. Bodies run low by the end of a long term too."

Help Them Cross the Finish Line Gently

19. **Map out the days ahead simply.** An outline like "school, then home, then rest, then bed" can ease worry about how much is still left before the holidays.



20. **Keep the evening rituals going, even tired ones.** A story, dim lights, a hand rub before sleep. These count for more, not less, right now.
21. **Have one phrase ready for the hard afternoons.** "You don't have to do anything right now. I'm here. Let's just be" covers a lot of ground when they walk in overwhelmed.
22. **Mention the end of term plainly.** Let them know what's coming without making it a big deal in either direction.
23. **Let them see you choose rest too.** "We're staying in tonight, no plans" shows them that resting is a real option, not just what happens when nothing else is on.



Strategies for Parental Burnout

Regulate Your Nervous System

1. **Protect a small window of sensory downtime.** Ten minutes with soft light and low noise, held as non-negotiable, can do more than an hour of "self-care" squeezed in around everything else.
2. **Try body doubling when starting feels impossible.** Ask someone to sit nearby while you tackle a task. Their quiet presence often does what willpower can't.
3. **Let your body curl up or rock if that's what it wants.** Bed, a swing, a blanket cocoon. Contained, rhythmic positions can bring you back down when things feel like too much.
4. **Use movement to reset, not to exercise.** Slow swinging, pacing the hallway, bouncing on a yoga ball. The point is regulation, not fitness.
5. **Cut the noise when you can.** Noise cancelling headphones, earplugs, white noise. Auditory relief is relief, full stop.
6. **Keep something weighted nearby.** A lap pad, a vest, a heavy blanket. Useful for the moments you feel like you're shutting down or flooding.
7. **Let your breath follow a rhythm instead of trying to control it.** Box breathing, or just music with a steady, slow beat.

Support Your Own Executive Function

8. **Write your own day down, not just your kids'.** A simple visual outline cuts the mental tax of deciding what comes next.
9. **Pick five or six meals and rotate them.** Removing "what's for dinner" from your daily decisions frees up more energy than it sounds like it would.
10. **Break chores into pieces smaller than you think you need to.** Not "clean kitchen," but "wipe bench." Then "load the dishwasher." Momentum starts smaller than pride wants it to.
11. **Take the help, even the imperfect kind.** NDIS support, a cleaner, meal delivery. Accepting it isn't giving up, it's getting some of yourself back.



12. **Use timers to work around time blindness.** External reminders for transitions and breaks stop everything from depending on you to track time you don't have to spare.
13. **Keep a visible record of what you got done.** Even "got dressed today" belongs on it. Burnout convinces you nothing is happening. This proves otherwise.
14. **Keep a notebook or app just for offloading.** Somewhere the spinning to-do list can go so it stops looping in your head.

Honour What Your Body and Emotions Need

15. **Practise a no that doesn't need a reason attached.** "That doesn't work for me right now" is complete on its own.
16. **Give yourself the same transition warnings you'd give a child.** A countdown, a cue, a small ritual before switching tasks or leaving the house.
17. **Learn your own early warning signs.** Tight chest, sensory overload, a shorter fuse. Catching these early is the difference between a rough hour and a rough week.
18. **Choose lower stimulation settings when you have the choice.** A quieter cafe, an off-peak grocery run, dimmer light. Small adjustments, real difference.
19. **Narrate what's happening to yourself.** "I feel foggy, maybe I need food or movement" turns a vague bad feeling into something you can actually act on.

Let Connection Happen on Your Terms

20. **Ask for connection in the form that works for you.** "I'd love to catch up, can we text instead of call?" is a completely reasonable ask.
21. **Co-regulate with your child without needing conversation.** Sitting quietly together, breathing side by side, or cuddling under a blanket counts as connection too.
22. **Find people who already get it.** Other neurodivergent parents, online or in person, where you don't have to explain the basics first.
23. **Say the validating thing to yourself that you'd say to a friend.** "I'm doing my best. I'm allowed to feel this way. My needs matter too."
24. **Set sensory boundaries without justifying them.** Sunglasses inside, skipping the loud event. You don't owe anyone the explanation.



25. **Let yourself unmask at home.** Stim, move, rest, speak however feels natural. Nobody there needs you to perform regulation you don't have.

Build Routines That Can Actually Hold

26. **Aim for rhythm, not rigid routine.** Something like "mornings are slow, food, then outside" leaves room to bend without the whole day collapsing.
27. **Build recovery time before you need it, not after you've crashed.** A quiet stretch after an outing, appointment, or sensory heavy task should be planned in, not squeezed in as an afterthought.
28. **Treat rest as part of the work, not a reward for finishing it.** Stillness isn't the break from your regulation cycle. It's a stage of it.