



FREE FIELD GUIDE

When your teen pulls away

Connection without pressure after a major family change.

Distance is not a verdict on your parenting

A teen may want privacy, control, and room to feel several things at once. You can stay available without demanding an immediate heart-to-heart. Notice patterns and seek professional support if you are worried about their safety or functioning.

Trade a big talk for a small opening

Try: "I am not going to make you talk now. I want you to know I can listen without arguing. Would you rather talk, text, walk, or have me check back tomorrow?" Then respect the answer while keeping the door open.

Do not make them your messenger

Avoid asking your teen to pass information, report on another adult, or reassure you that your choices were right. If they bring up contact or custody, acknowledge the question and get qualified, case-specific guidance instead of promising a result.

Offer choices inside real boundaries

Choices can be concrete: where to sit for a check-in, which safe adult to talk with, a familiar meal, or when to revisit a difficult topic. Be clear about boundaries that are not theirs to decide, especially safety and legal requirements.

Educational peer support, not legal, medical, or mental-health advice. Adapt these ideas to your safety and your child's needs. For immediate danger, call local emergency services. In the U.S., The Hotline: 800-799-7233 or text START to 88788; 988 provides mental-health crisis support.



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A low-pressure reconnection plan

Small signals of steadiness count.

Try the two-minute check-in

"What is one thing that made today harder?" "Is there one thing I can do differently this week?" If they say "nothing," thank them for answering. Keep ordinary connection alive: music, a ride, food, or an activity they choose.

When you need more help

If your teen talks about self-harm, seems in immediate danger, or you are unsure how to keep them safe, seek urgent professional help. In the U.S., call or text 988 for crisis support. For ongoing concerns, ask a pediatrician, school counselor, or licensed mental-health professional about age-appropriate support.

One way my teen prefers to communicate:

A safe adult my teen can choose besides me:

A note from Victoria

You can be strong and still need a place to set down what this has cost you. Our peer-to-peer support is here for conversation and connection; it is not a substitute for a teen's clinical or crisis care.

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