

## Transition Home Checklist

1. Before your child returns home make sure you have an understanding of what will happen once they are again living in your home. The best way to do this is with a home contract executed by your child with you. This contract should be written by your child with input from his or her therapist and ideally, both parents.
2. The home contract can include school, clothes, personal appearance, friends, boy or girl friends, music, job, computers, and general life expectations.
3. Make sure you and your spouse, ex-spouse or significant other are comfortable with these rules and can abide by them as well. Ideally these guidelines should apply to both homes if your child will be spending time with your ex. If consequences are a part of the contract, it is important that the consequence is carried out in both homes.
4. More than likely, your kid will need ongoing support, either with a therapist, doctor, or both and a support group. The type and frequency of this support will vary from child to child, so be sure to discuss with his or her treatment team.
5. Reverting to “old roles” is easy and very tempting for both you and your child. As we know, when anyone in the family dynamic goes there, it doesn’t take long for everybody to revert. (Usually about 2 milliseconds.) Suggestion: have a pre-arranged “signal” for each other to help recognize when either person is slipping back into old roles, hopefully preventing the spiraling downward conversations that we are all too familiar with... allow for time-outs, they work.
6. There will definitely be a honeymoon period when your child returns home; how long it lasts depends upon individual circumstances... it will end however. That doesn’t mean things need to return to what led to placement in the first place, your child learned valuable skills during his or her stay. Be willing to trust that they can and will make the right decision, with guidance, sometimes without. If things continue to slip, try and identify them as soon as possible and take the appropriate measures to deal with them. The longer you wait, the harder it is. Ignoring it or just saying “yes” didn’t work the last time... it won’t work now.
7. Get support for yourself, your spouse and/or your significant other. A parent support group or individual therapy will assist you in working with your child to insure they are successful.