

Schoolwork Without the Nightly Battle

Homework starts, school collaboration, and growing independence.

For parents and caregivers of children ages 4-17

Start with one page and one real-life moment. These tools are designed to be practiced together, not assigned to your child as another thing to get right.

Choose a place to begin

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A steadier family life, one workable change at a time.

Print or annotate digitally. No fillable form fields. Use the developmental adaptations, not age alone, to choose the right level of support.

Learn together

Start with a small homework agreement

A workable plan protects learning and the relationship.

01 Find the real assignment

Use the agreed school source: planner, folder, or learning portal. Check what must be done, what is unclear, and what supplies are missing. Let the child participate rather than silently managing everything for them.

02 Make a short first block

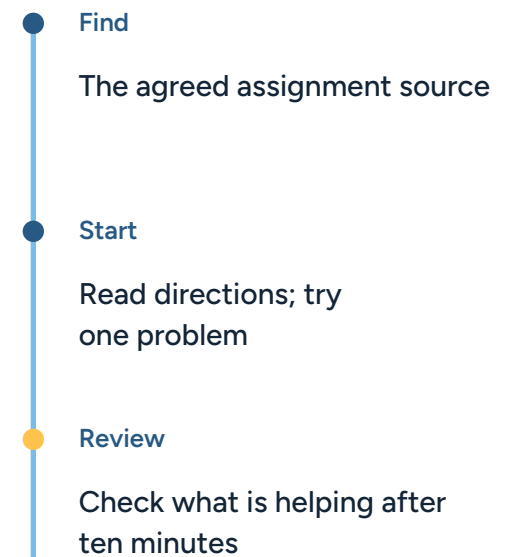
Choose one visible start: read the directions together or try one problem. Experiment with a brief work interval and a planned break, adjusted to the child. Movement and bathroom needs are not rewards.

03 Agree on an adult stop-and-review point

Before starting, decide when you will reassess. If work is persistently inaccessible or excessively long, document the barrier and contact the teacher. Do not turn hours of distress into the nightly price of compliance.

Illustrative example

A small first block



The interval is illustrative. Adjust it to the child.

Words to borrow

Let us read the directions and try the first problem. After ten minutes, we will check what is helping and whether we need to ask the teacher a question.

Younger children need nearby scaffolding. Teens should help choose the schedule, location, and kind of check-in. Shorten blocks when fatigue or task difficulty rises.

 Your small experiment

Our homework agreement

Start with a small homework agreement

Choose one real-life moment. Write, sketch, or talk through the plan together.

Start time, place, and assignment source

Start time

Place

Assignment source

First action / work block / break

First action

Work block

Break

Our review point and teacher question

Review point

Teacher question

A plan can be revised. Keep the support your child still needs.

Learn together

Match the support to the barrier

Not every unfinished assignment is an attention problem.

01 Cannot begin or loses the steps

Try a modeled first item, written directions, or one section at a time. Ask the child to explain the task in their own words without making it a test of obedience.

02 Knows it but loses materials

Use one return folder, a packing cue, and a brief adult check until the routine is established. For digital work, include the actual submission step, not just completion.

03 Does not understand or becomes distressed

Repeated reading, writing, or math difficulties may need targeted instruction or evaluation. Ask about learning, language, vision, hearing, anxiety, bullying, and sleep concerns as appropriate. More reminders will not teach a missing academic skill.

The tool at a glance

Barrier and support

If the barrier is...

Beginning

Model the first item.

Materials

Use a return folder and packing cue.

Understanding

Mark the confusing part and ask for help.

More reminders will not teach a missing academic skill.

Words to borrow

You have tried several times and this still is not making sense. Let us mark where it got confusing and ask for help with that part.

For teens, ask permission before looking through work except where supervision is necessary for safety. Agree on what is checked, by whom, and when.

 Your small experiment

The support that fits

Match the support to the barrier

Choose one real-life moment. Write, sketch, or talk through the plan together.

What our child can do independently

Where the task breaks down

Support to test / question for the teacher

Support to test

Question for the teacher

A plan can be revised. Keep the support your child still needs.

Learn together

Build a school partnership

Bring examples, a clear request, and your child's perspective.

01 Describe function and strengths

Bring a few dated examples, work samples, and what helps. Include interests and strengths. Ask what teachers see across settings instead of assuming home and school will look the same.

02 Ask for an evaluation of needs

In U.S. public schools, ask whether evaluation for a Section 504 plan or an IEP is appropriate. ADHD does not automatically establish eligibility. IEPs address eligible special-education needs; Section 504 can provide disability-related access supports. Private-school obligations differ.

03 Make support specific

Discuss the barrier, exact support, responsible adult, and review date. Examples: written directions plus a check of understanding, a packing check, planned movement, or chunked work. Extra time alone may not solve the problem.

The tool at a glance

Make support specific

Barrier

Bring dated examples and strengths.



Support

Name the action and responsible adult.



Review

Agree on a date and how to judge usefulness.

Bring the child's perspective into the conversation.

Words to borrow

We are seeing ____, especially during _____. Our child says _____. Could we meet to discuss supports and whether an evaluation is needed?

This is general U.S. school guidance, not legal advice. Ask the school for its evaluation process and procedural safeguards; confirm local timelines and requirements.

 Your small experiment

Our school conversation

Build a school partnership

Choose one real-life moment. Write, sketch, or talk through the plan together.

Two examples and one strength

Example one

Example two

One strength

Support requested / person responsible

Support requested

Person responsible

Review date and how we will judge usefulness

Review date

How we will judge usefulness

A plan can be revised. Keep the support your child still needs.

Learn together

Track support, then hand over gradually

The goal is supported independence, not constant surveillance.

01 Choose one shared target

With the child and teacher, choose an observable action such as submitting completed work through the portal. Set an achievable criterion, planned prompt, and brief private feedback. Avoid public behavior rankings.

02 Use information to improve the plan

Review progress over a short agreed period. If school uses a daily report card, keep goals few and feedback predictable. Do not add a second round of punishment at home for every difficult school day.

03 Fade one support at a time

Move from doing together to a check-in, then to the child initiating the check. If the step is too large, restore support without shame. Increasing school demands may require support to increase again.

The tool at a glance

Hand over gradually

Together

Do the step together.



Check-in

The child tries; the adult checks.



Child-led

The child initiates the check.

If the step is too large, restore support without shame.

Words to borrow

You have used the folder routine with me. Would you like to try packing first and asking me for a quick check afterward?

Invite the child into meetings in a developmentally appropriate way. Teens should have a meaningful voice in goals, disclosure, privacy, and decisions about support.

 Your small experiment

Our next independence step

Track support, then hand over gradually

Choose one real-life moment. Write, sketch, or talk through the plan together.

One target / what counts / prompt

Target

What counts

Prompt

Review: worked / partly worked / needs redesign

Circle one, then note what you learned.

Worked

Partly worked

Needs redesign

Next independence step and backup support

Next independence step

Backup support

A plan can be revised. Keep the support your child still needs.

 Care, evidence, and next steps

Support beyond the page

Use these resources alongside your child's care, not in place of it.

What these tools are

Original educational worksheets informed by established approaches to parent behavior training, routines, and school support. The exact scripts, time intervals, and layouts have not been validated as a treatment package. Adapt them with your clinician to your child and family.

When to ask for more help

Ask your child's clinician about structured parent training in behavior management and an individualized treatment plan. For children under six, parent behavior training is recommended before medication. School-age treatment commonly combines medication with behavioral and school supports. Discuss treatment choices and any medication changes with the treating clinician.

Make it fit your family

Adapt for developmental level, language, disability, sensory needs, culture, family structure, and available time. Tools should not demand eye contact, suppress harmless movement, or reward hiding distress. Never withhold basic needs or connection. Faith practices can support a family when welcomed; symptoms are not a spiritual failure.

Sources and further reading

CDC: Parent training in behavior management

<https://www.cdc.gov/adhd/treatment/behavior-therapy.html>

CDC: ADHD in the classroom

<https://www.cdc.gov/adhd/treatment/classroom.html>

CDC: Treatment of ADHD

<https://www.cdc.gov/adhd/treatment/index.html>

 Source review: September 2026. These PDFs do not establish a clinician-patient relationship. For urgent mental-health concerns in the U.S., call or text 988. For imminent danger, call 911.