

Learn Self-Management



You can think of self-management skills as the “manager” or “CEO” of the brain. These skills help your child do everything from managing behavior to keeping track of schoolwork, completing assignments and staying focused in class.

By providing support, structure and strategies, families can help children develop the self-management skills they need for success.

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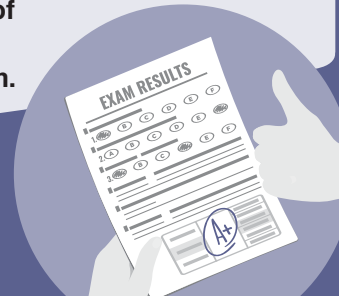
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Benefits of Self-Management

Self-management skills help students take responsibility for learning. They also help kids control their thoughts, feelings and actions—even when temptation strikes.

Strong self-management skills lead to:

- **Better grades.**
- **Higher test scores.**
- **Increased likelihood of graduation.**
- **Stronger interpersonal skills.**
- **Reduced chance of risky behavior.**
- **Higher self-esteem.**

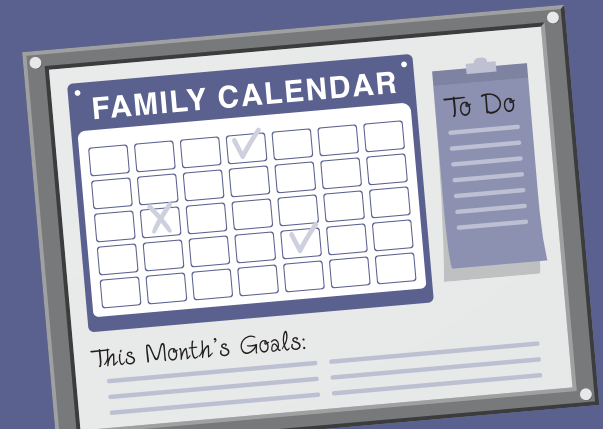


Boost Intrinsic Motivation

When students are motivated by an inner reward, they are more likely to stick with a task. Students with inner motivation learn because they're curious. They retain what they have learned longer, and they earn higher grades.

To help your child develop inner motivation:

- **Discuss interests.** Before your child works on a project, ask, “What do you want to learn from it?”
- **Help your child see progress** while working on a big task.
- **Talk about what your child is learning** in school.
- **Give positive feedback**, and also encourage self-praise for a job well done.



Model Self-Management Skills

What you do speaks louder than anything you ever tell your children. Let your child see you working on your own self-management skills.

Demonstrate how you:

- **Set goals** and work toward them.
- **Keep a family calendar** to help you manage time.
- **Create and follow** household routines.
- **Finish tasks**, even when they are unpleasant.
- **Practice self-care** to help manage stress.

Source: CASEL's *Widely Used Framework Identifies Five Core Competencies*, Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL).

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Promote Self-Discipline

The goal of self-discipline is to help your child rely less on you in order to make positive choices. To encourage self-discipline:

- **Establish routines.** For example, set a regular time for your child to do schoolwork every day.
- **Make family rules clear** and enforce them consistently so your child always knows what you expect. Let your child suggest rules that would make life smoother, too.
- **Give your child chores** to teach planning and responsibility.
- **Create a supportive atmosphere.** A child who knows it's OK to make mistakes will be better able to develop self-discipline.
- **Let your child make some choices.** This teaches that your child can choose responsibly without always being told what to do.



Get Organized

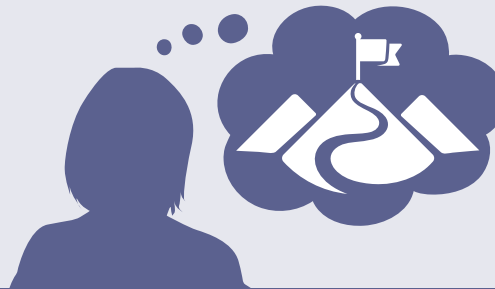
Some children have a difficult time staying organized. And when students become disorganized, their grades often suffer. Encourage your child to:

- **Store work for each class** in a separate notebook or folder.
- **Use a planner** to write down assignments, test dates and other responsibilities, so your child can see everything at one glance.
- **Clean the study area** at least once a week. Your child can throw away trash, file papers and make sure supplies are where they belong.

Make the Most of Time

Managing time can be challenging for children. These strategies can make it easier:

- **Encourage your child** to make daily checklists of tasks to complete.
- **Teach your child** to use small bits of time. Your child could study flash cards on the way to an appointment or review a few math problems in the car.
- **Show your child** how to break down large assignments into smaller parts and schedule due dates for each part.
- **Look for time wasters.** In many homes, digital devices are a major culprit. By limiting recreational screen time, your child will have hours free for more productive activities.



Teach Goal-Setting

Your child will be more motivated to work toward goals if the results will be personally meaningful. Your child can do this by writing down a list of goals and ways to accomplish them. The most effective goals are:

- **Specific.** "I want to master the times tables," not "I want to do better in math."
- **Planned for.** Help your child brainstorm the steps needed to achieve the goal.
- **Realistic.** The goal and steps to take can be ambitious, but they should also be possible.
- **Time-sensitive.** Have your child set both short-term and long-term goals.
- **Reviewed regularly.** Is your child making progress? Are changes needed?

Encourage Perseverance

Learning that they can stick with a tough challenge gives children the confidence they need to succeed. To help your child develop perseverance:

- **Point to role models.** They might be friends, relatives or famous people. Discuss their lives and describe their traits.
- **Talk about times when your child showed courage.** Your child can remember feeling proud of tackling and overcoming challenges.
- **Discuss success stoppers.** What keeps people from pushing forward? (Negative attitudes, frustration, etc.) How can your child avoid these pitfalls?
- **Emphasize that no one is perfect.** Everyone must work through challenges. Express confidence that your child has what it takes, no matter what.

Manage Stress

Self-calming techniques can help your child manage stress in positive ways. Suggest these strategies:

- **Do a solo activity** to relax and regroup. Your child can read or write in a journal.
- **Tackle a chore.** Completing a task can help your child burn off steam and feel good about helping the family.
- **Exercise.** Your child can bike, jog, dance. Do it together!
- **Sing a silly song.** Laughter is a great stress-reliever.
- **Take deep breaths** and then "shake off" negative feelings.