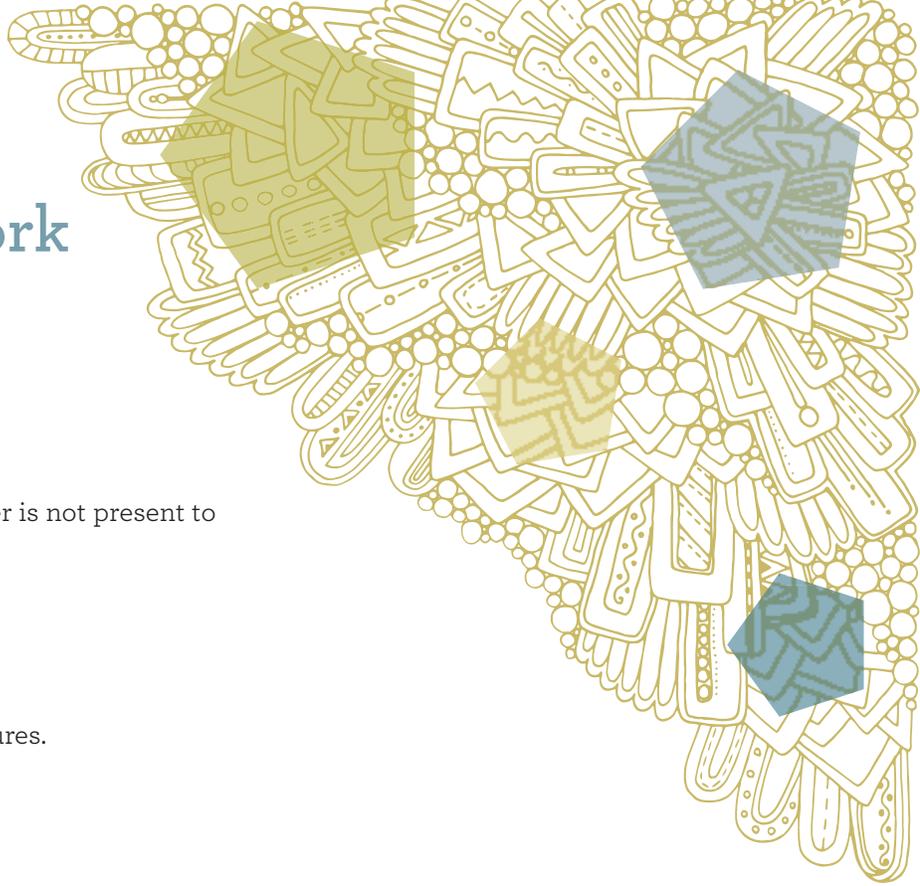


Completing Homework

Situational Stressor



Triggers:

- Student does not understand concept and teacher is not present to answer question.
- Student is tired.
- Student has trouble focusing.
- Environment is noisy.
- Student has difficulty with deadlines, time pressures.
- Student has difficulty asking for help.



Thinking Strategies:

Student Positive Affirmations

- I have practiced this.
- I can do my best and get help from the teacher tomorrow.
- I improve my skills every day.

Positive Adult Responses

- I really admire how you concentrated and did your homework.
- I like the effort you put in but let's work together to figure out what you do not understand.
(Appendix E, Reference 14)

Activities

- Picture It - Prior to starting homework, have your child close his/her eyes and picture themselves doing well on their homework. Guide your child by stating: "Close your eyes, imagine you are starting your homework. Make sure your pencil is sharpened. Take your time and read each question. Picture yourself completing the homework. Go over each item to make sure the answers are correct. Envision yourself getting your homework back and you got the best grade ever."



Focusing & Calming Strategies

- Zentangle Words – Students can doodle by making continuous repetitive patterns around letters of positive words. (See Activity Templates D, E) (22)
- Play calming music and allow your child to doodle.

Movement Poses & Breathing (See Appendix C)

- Believers Bridge
- Calm Down Dog
- Contented Cat
- Recharger
- Wring Out the Worries
- Balloon Breathing



Sensory Strategies

Activities

- Movement often helps increase the level of alertness. Use movement when memorizing multiplication tables or spelling words. Break homework into 10-15 minute segments interspersed with movement such as jumping rope, bouncing on a trampoline, rocking in a rocking chair or swinging. (14)
- Allow your child to choose different seating options such as lying on the floor on their stomach with a clip board or standing.
- Unwind and Relax Through Nature – Unplug from electronic devices and phones. Nature decreases stress levels, while building self-regulation skills. Allow your child free time playing outside prior to starting their homework. Let your child relax from a day spent being indoors and sedentary. Take a walk. Play catch. Lay on the grass and watch the clouds float by. Notice the sounds, smells, textures and sights around you. Encourage your child to find a favorite “thinking spot” outdoors. Provide blankets, pillows, table or chair for completing their work in their special space. Outdoor chores are another way of spending time in nature. Develop a list of activities to choose from such as sweeping the walk, washing the car, pulling weeds, raking leaves, shoveling snow, and carrying out the trash.

Tools

- Suck on suckers, chew gum or eat a crunchy snack.
- Allow your child to choose different seating options such as lying on the floor on their stomach with a clip board or standing.

Teaching Moment

A chaotic environment makes a child feel powerless. A child may have difficulty relaxing due to worrying about what will happen next. To be successful creative learners, compassionate, respectful, self-aware human beings, children must be given opportunities to draw their awareness away from our overwhelming chaotic world. (12)

Developed by: Alisa Deininger, OTR/L, Sarah Kolic, OTR/L & Denise Young, COTA/L (2016) for Every Moment Counts: Promoting Mental Health Throughout the Day. All of the Calm Moments Cards and supporting materials are free and downloadable in the Embedded Programs tab at www.everymomentcounts.org