



TIPS FOR DESIGNING A HOME CHALLENGE

A Home Challenge is a behavior-reward system that provides a routine and helps motivate your child to complete daily goals

- 1. Include a reasonable number of behavior goals (5 or fewer).** Trying to target too many behaviors at one time will overwhelm your child. It's best to start with a couple and add more behavior goals over time. You can include general behaviors (e.g., getting along with siblings) and behaviors during homeschooling (e.g., getting started on assignments).
- 2. Make sure the behavior goals are achievable.** You want your child to be earning rewards and they will be most motivated when they earn them regularly. You may need to include a mix of more challenging behavior goals or tasks and less challenging behavior goals or tasks. Or you may need to adjust your expectations (e.g., getting one reminder to brush your teeth).
- 3. Create a plan you can stick to every day.** Choose behaviors or tasks that happen every day (or almost every day) and choose daily rewards that are manageable. If a reward is an activity, make sure your child has enough time to do the activity before going to bed. If the reward is a tangible item, make sure it's something that you can easily have on hand every day, and isn't something that's expensive.
- 4. Involve your child in setting up and revising the system.** Have your child help choose rewards, agree on the time when the tasks will need to be completed each morning, and ask for their input on the tasks that are being added to the list. Some kids like to decorate their Home Challenge, and this can help them feel like it really belongs to them.
- 5. Be creative when thinking about rewards.** If you think that your child will say, "I don't want anything," and you can't come up with a reward, think about things that you already give your child "for free." Parents often provide many material things and activities, so a child may not feel motivated to work for more. So, turn something they already get into something they have to earn. Consider making this thing they already get just a little bit better when it becomes something they need to work for. For example, if they already get to watch 10 minutes of cartoons in the morning, let them now watch 20 minutes instead.
- 6. Be positive when you introduce the system to your child!**
 - **Do Say:** "I know that getting ready in the morning on your own is something that's really tricky for you, so I'd like to give you a reward for working really hard at getting that done."
 - **Don't Say:** "You have been really terrible about getting your morning routine done lately, so now we have to do this whole system to get you doing things that you should already be doing."
 - Consider introducing and discussing the system using a video game analogy: The goal is to earn as many points as you can. Once you get really good at Level 1, the system changes and you have new goals. Level 2 might be a little harder, but that's because you did such a great job at Level 1!