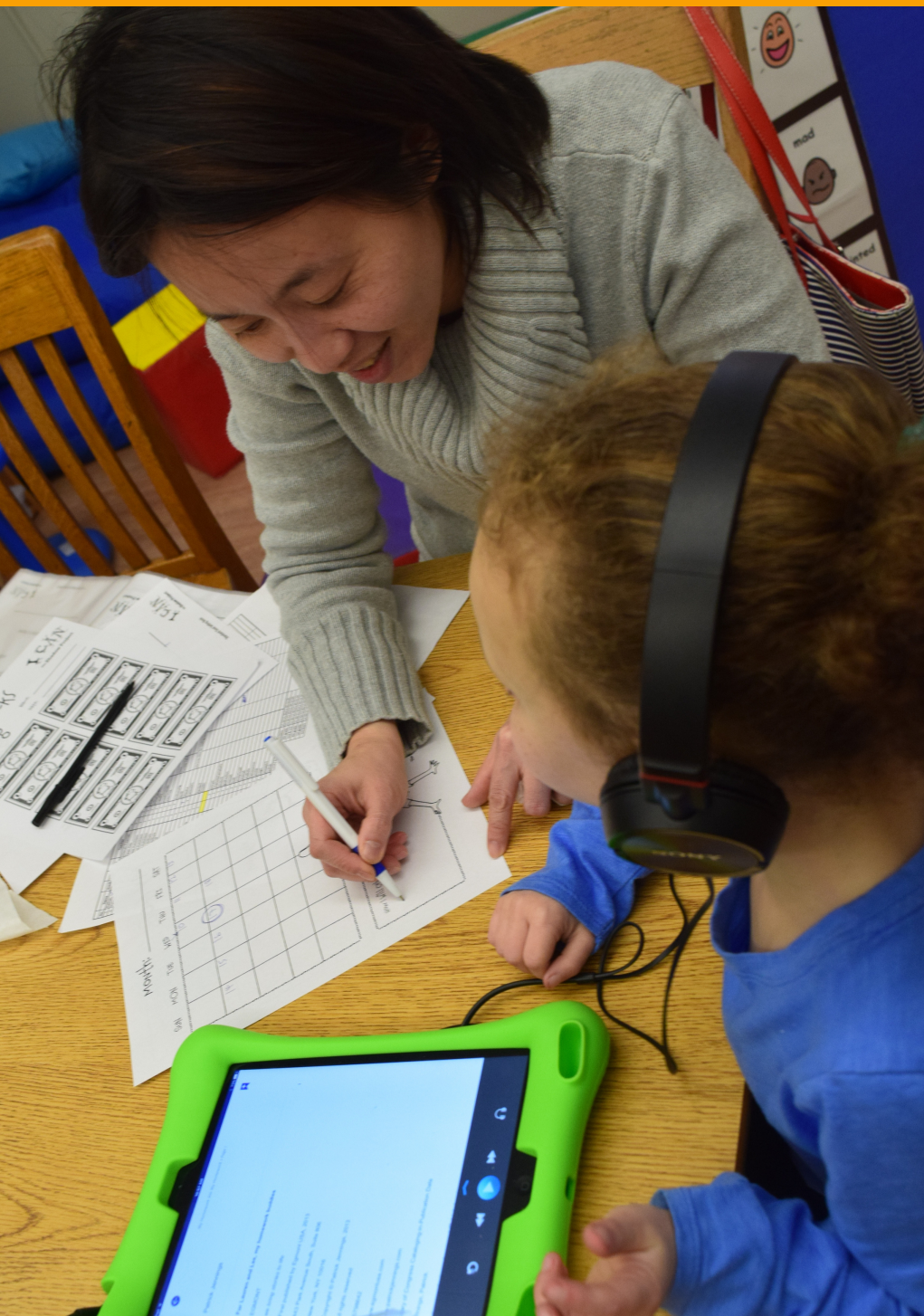


Setting Goals with Your Child

Resources for families to support student success in school, homework, and family life



The Shadow Project is a nonprofit that makes school more accessible and engaging for children with learning challenges.



The Shadow Project

www.shadow-project.org

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How Goals Help Your Child Thrive

Setting goals helps [children with learning challenges build important skills](#) for short- and long-term success in school and life. Through goal setting, your child gains

- A [sense of control](#) over their own life. This can help with stress, anxiety, behavior, and develops your child's awareness of responsibility for their actions and choices.
- Something to look forward to, and a reason to celebrate their progress. This kind of [regular, positive reinforcement](#) is important for children who tend to get more negative feedback through struggles with learning and behavior.
- [Planning and time management skills](#), as your child maps out goals and marks progress using calendars.
- [Self-awareness](#). This is like an engine that powers your child's ability to learn and grown from any experience in life.

But perhaps [the biggest gain is in confidence](#)! Children who regularly set and achieve their own goals have proof that they can succeed at doing things that are important to them. This process is critical to [developing motivation and drive to keep trying when things are hard](#).

Getting Started with Goal Setting

1. Learn about goals together with your child. Make this a time to connect and learn together by watching [this fun video](#) about goal setting.
2. Help your child choose an ambitious but attainable goal. Page 3 of this guide has a list of examples to get you started.
3. Write it down. Use one of our [Goals Worksheets](#) and post it on the fridge, bathroom mirror, or anyplace else your child will see it regularly. Or just it write on a piece of paper.
4. Track and reflect on progress. Find early, small successes to notice and reward to fuel your child's motivation and drive to keep at it. Use [these questions](#) to start a conversation with your child about their progress.

Sample Goals

You can ask your child's teacher for suggestions, too!

Reading

1. Read for ____ minutes a day/a week
2. Write/spell/count/sort items for ____ minutes a day/a week
3. Read aloud with an adult or sibling for ____ minutes a day
4. Talk about the book you are reading/something you learned with someone in your home
5. Find a new book you want to read and write it down
6. Write down unfamiliar words while reading and talk about them with an adult

Learning

1. Start your learning activities at __:____ and finish at __:____
2. Do your learning activities for ____ minutes a day
3. Stay on your learning websites while you are learning
4. Choose something you want to learn about, and spend ____ minutes a day/week learning it
5. Keep food and drinks away from technology
6. Stay in a quiet place when you're learning
7. Use your ____ (tool) ____ when you are learning

Routines

1. Take ____ [sensory breaks](#) a day.
2. Start your day by getting out of bed at __:____
3. Eat breakfast
4. Go to bed at __:____
5. Clean your device every ____ days
6. Clean up your plate/area after you eat/play
7. Finish your chores by __:____.

Note:

Visual timers can help children be successful with timed goals. Check out [sand timers](#), [countdown timers](#), and [free timer apps](#).

Healthy behaviors

1. Wash your hands after going to the bathroom, before and after eating, after being outside.
2. If you are upset/frustrated/annoyed, count to 10/take 3 deep breaths/say "I feel..."
3. Do ____ minutes of "[heavy work](#)" a day.
4. Take a break from sitting down every 20 minutes. Try stretching, walking around your house, talking to a family member, drinking some water, or taking deep breaths.
5. Before you play video games, eat a snack/drink a glass of water/finish ____ (chore or learning activity) ____.
6. Play video games for up to ____ minutes a day
7. Avoid screens 20 minutes before bed. Instead, try to read a paper book, draw, take deep breaths, stretch, or write down/think about what you are thankful for.
8. Use kind words with the people you live with
9. Respect your family's personal time or working time
10. Share ____ with your siblings
11. Help a family member with something they want help doing

Marking Progress Toward Goals

Support motivation, planning skills, and a sense of accomplishment with these visual tools to track your child's progress and mark their achievement.

Goal Tracking Sheets

You'll find worksheets in this [Google Drive folder](#). Right click on a worksheet and click "make a copy" to save an editable version to your Google Drive. Download or print worksheets, too.



My Goals 🏆

Name: _____ Date: _____

My goal:

My goal:

My goal:

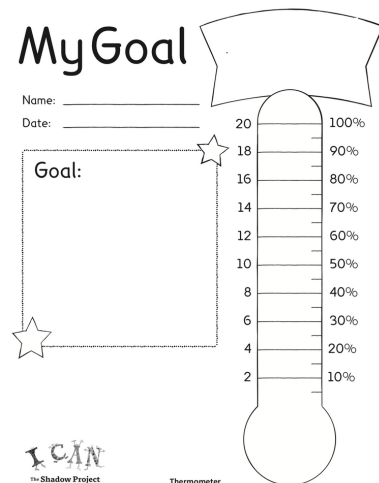
Pennies or strips of paper in a jar

Every time your child makes progress towards or reaches a goal, add an item to the jar. Make a mark on the jar or come up with a number of items to shoot for, so your child knows when they'll get to celebrate their hard work. There are lots of ways to adapt this method of tracking - magnets on a fridge, stickers or checkmarks on a paper chart, etc.



Thermometer worksheet

Included in the [Google Drive folder](#) is a worksheet that uses a thermometer to track progress. Print the worksheet and color in a notch on the thermometer when your child completes a goal, makes progress toward a goal, or tries hard to overcome frustration or discouragement. Write the goal your child is working towards at the top of the thermometer, or write how you'll celebrate.



Celebrating Progress & Success

Small and frequent celebration builds your child's confidence and their motivation to persist when things are hard. Plus, parents and kids strengthen positive bonds, a key building block for your child's development.

A moment of connection & reflection

Tell your child what you appreciate about them

Ask what they are most proud of or their favorite memory of this school year

Ask which goal was the hardest for them to reach, and tell them how proud you are

Remind your child of a moment that was difficult, and how they overcame it

Ask how it makes them feel to see their progress

Ask them their favorite thing about themselves

Fun activities

Do a happy dance with your child

Play a game together, like Pictionary, card games, or a scavenger hunt

Draw or paint self portraits or everyone in the family makes a portrait of someone else

Make a favorite food together

Have a silly outfit day

Spend time doing their favorite activity with them

Special recognition

Create a paper crown for your child to wear, or an award certificate to hang on the fridge

Your child gets to choose a special snack or meal

Your child gets to play video games, have bonus screen time, or choose the family movie

Everyone in the family says their favorite thing about your child

Not sure what celebration is best? Review this list with your child and let them choose!

The Shadow Project would love to see how you're celebrating!

Share your child's success and inspire other families with your examples.

Send us photos at info@shadow-project.org or tag us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), or [Instagram](#)