

Self-Management Home Connection: Taking Turns and Making Munchies

Self-Management includes being in control of our emotions and behaviors, accomplishing tasks, and succeeding in new and challenging situations.

Thoughts for adults supporting this project

The chart on the other side lists specific examples of ways students can build their Self-Management skills. As with any skill, it takes regular, intentional practice to become proficient. Fortunately, the more confident and competent a young person becomes with them, the more “portable” the skills will be. This means that these same skills will be more readily available down the road, in other situations, when they encounter challenging social or work situations.

Keep in mind

Two factors that go a long way toward helping young people stay with an activity long enough to truly practice their Self-Management skills are adult modeling and the “fun factor.”

The acclaimed American writer James Baldwin once said, “Children have not always listened to their elders, but they have never failed to imitate them.” Our children are always watching what we do and how we do it. They notice how the adults in their life display the Self-Management skills that they themselves are working to develop.

As for the “fun factor”—we can’t over estimate the power of pleasure! When we’re having a good time with one another, it helps to ease the (comparatively!) minor disappointments that naturally come along with game playing and creative cooking. Helping your child relax and enjoy the process also supports them in pairing enjoyment with sticking to activities, even as those inevitable bumps in the road occur.

Reflection questions

- Which skills in the chart are easiest for me to model? Which are most challenging?
- Which skills do I think my child already exhibits regularly, with ease? Which are still being developed?
- How can I use my own strengths to support my child as they develop theirs?

Extension idea

Institute a “Family Fun Night” tradition. Choose a consistent night of the week and take turns, with each household member having a chance to plan the evening. This might include the dinner menu, a dessert, and an activity in which everyone else participates. Over time, everyone in the family will have many opportunities to practice their Self-Management skills as they participate “without comment or complaint” in one another’s chosen plan. It’s also a great opportunity to get to know more about each other’s tastes and interests!



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Although it's very important to think about Self-Management skills and make plans for how to strengthen them, the real payoff comes from practice, practice, practice. Choose a game or a cooking project to do together with at least one other person in your household.

Before you begin, put a √ in the "Before" column next to the skills you want to get better at by doing the activity. Show it to your partner(s) so they can support you. When you finish, put a x or star in the "After" column next to all the skills you think others could see you doing well. Then answer the questions below.

Before	After	Self-Management Skills
		Pay attention
		Wait for my turn
		Focus on a task despite a problem or distraction
		Act comfortable in a new situation
		Perform the steps of a task in order
		Think before I act
		Pass up something I wanted, or do something I did not like, to get something better in the future
		Accept another choice when my first choice was unavailable
		Stay calm when faced with a challenge
		Adjust well to changes in plans
		Adjust well when going from one setting to another

My activity was _____

My partner(s): _____

What was something that was hard for you? How did you rise to the challenge?

Which skills made the activity fun for you? Why? _____

What's another fun way you could practice these skills at home? _____

