

Anatomy of a school behavior contract

Many students thrive at school with the help of a behavior contract. See how key parts can help motivate kids to replace negative behaviors with more positive ones. Keep in mind that there's no standard behavior contract. This sample contract may look very different from the one your child's school uses.



Dates

A behavior contract works best when you and your child's teacher refer to it often. Even just a month or two may be enough time to see if it's working.

School behavior contract

Dates

Effective from January 18, 2019 to March 18, 2019

Goals

Goal #1

- Gwen will call out fewer than three times during a lesson and instead will raise her hand and wait to speak.

Goal #2

- Gwen will complete and turn in her homework at least three days a week.

Goals

Clear goals help your child, you, and the school understand how your child is expected to behave. Positive wording helps your child focus on what to do, rather than on what not to do. It's best to have a smaller number of goals to encourage your child and make it easier to track progress. If your child reaches a goal, celebrate. Then work with the teacher to target another behavior, if needed.

Student and teacher responsibilities

Student responsibilities

To work toward these goals, Gwen will:

1. Respond when she sees Mrs. Smith use the agreed-on signal reminding her to raise her hand.
2. Write homework assignments in her planner and ask Mrs. Smith to initial it.
3. Put completed homework in her homework folder and turn it in each morning.

Teacher responsibilities

To help Gwen meet these goals, Mrs. Smith will:

1. Use the agreed-on signal to remind Gwen to raise her hand.
2. Write homework assignments on the board and initial Gwen's planner each day.
3. Provide a clearly labeled place where students turn in homework assignments.

Student responsibilities

Kids are more successful in changing a behavior when they have specifics on what to do. It's helpful when contracts list steps students can follow to help them meet their goals.

Teacher responsibilities

Kids form new habits more easily when they get support from teachers. Ideally, a school contract will include details about how the teacher will help. This will also give your child a clear idea of what to expect.

Consequences

The consequences of not meeting these goals:

1. If Gwen calls out three times during a lesson, she will move to a pre-established place in the classroom, regroup, and then rejoin the class once she has calmed down.
2. Gwen will have to use free-choice time to complete her unfinished homework.

Consequences

The point of listing consequences is so they'll be consistent. They should also flow naturally from any misbehavior. This helps kids connect consequences to their actions. It also helps kids see the benefits of acting appropriately.

Rewards

The rewards for meeting these goals:

1. Each day that Gwen calls out fewer than three times, she will earn one sticker. When she has earned five stickers, she may choose a reward from the list she and Mrs. Smith have created together.
2. Each day that Gwen turns in her homework and has her assignments from the previous day written down and initialed, she will be allowed to choose one of the following:
 - Spending 10 minutes before recess using headphones to listen to music
 - Spending 10 minutes before lunch doing an activity of her choice

Rewards

Rewards can motivate kids to put in the effort to change their behavior, as well as reinforce good behavior. However, rewards need to be meaningful to your child. And they shouldn't be overused. Work with your child and the teacher to come up with any rewards to include in the contract.

Signatures

I agree to do my best to meet the responsibilities above.

Student Signature

Teacher Signature

I agree to this contract.

Parent/Caregiver Signature

Signatures

Signing the contract shows that everyone understands and agrees. It's important to talk with your child about how the contract is a promise to work hard each day. You may also want to remind your child that working on behavior can lead to better relationships with teachers and other students.