

# ACADEMIC MOTIVATION/STUDY AND ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

## BEHAVIORAL DEFINITIONS

1. A significant difference between ability as measured by a standardized IQ or achievement test and lower than expected academic performance.
2. Poor study habits and disorganization (e.g., loses assignments, forgets homework, doesn't take notes, wastes time in school, doesn't complete tasks, etc.).
3. Anxiety, depression, or low self-esteem that interferes with learning and academic achievement.
4. Engages in persistent pattern of disruptive or attention-seeking behaviors when frustrated with school demands.
5. Gives up easily in the face of struggle (e.g., a difficult assignment or a challenging task).
6. Avoids competition unless success is guaranteed.
7. Procrastinates and works slowly, often not completing the task, or rushes through an assignment without regard to the quality of work.
8. Academic achievement declines in response to environmental stressors such as parental divorce, illness, family death, etc.
9. Family instability (e.g., frequent moves, unemployment, lack of financial resources and parental supervision, etc.) interferes with the student's focus on school and the demands of learning.

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LONG-TERM GOALS

- 1. Raise academic achievement to a level that is commensurate with ability level.
  - 2. Exhibit intrinsic motivation and positive attitudes toward learning and academic achievement.
  - 3. Develop a positive self-concept about self as a learner and student.
  - 4. Reduce anxiety and stress associated with academic demands.
  - 5. Develop effective study habits and an organizational structure for academic accomplishment.
  - 6. Demonstrate personal responsibility toward learning and acknowledge the relationship between personal effort and positive results in school.
  - 7. Develop effective strategies for coping with academic challenges, familial stressors, and frustration.
  - 8. Parents and school staff establish reasonable academic expectations for the student and reinforce his/her efforts to achieve success in school.
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SHORT-TERM OBJECTIVES

- 1. Cooperate with providing biopsychosocial information to assist in determining the causes for the underachievement. (1, 2)

THERAPEUTIC INTERVENTIONS

- 1. Gather information about the student’s academic performance and social, medical, family, learning, or behavioral difficulties from discussions with the student, parent, referring teacher, and/or special educator.
- 2. In accordance with school policy, and in collaboration with the school child study team and any community service providers, arrange for psycho-educational testing to determine the presence of learning, emotional, or behavioral

- disabilities, and whether special education services are warranted; provide the student, family, and colleagues with the outcomes of the evaluation according to ethical standards (see the Learning Difficulties chapter in this *Planner*).
2. Parents and teachers verbalize an understanding of the causes of underachievement. (3, 4)
  3. Recommend that the parents read *Smart Parenting: How to Parent So Children Will Learn* by Rimm; *SOS: Help for Parents*, 2nd ed. by Clark; or other literature to prepare for subsequent discussions with the student and teachers concerning the student's learning needs.
  4. Refer parents to a support group addressing underachievement, academic motivation, or giftedness in children (e.g., Council for Exceptional Children (703-620-3660 or [www.cec.sped.org](http://www.cec.sped.org)) or The National Association for Gifted Children (202-785-4268 or <http://www.nagc.org/>).
  3. Participate in a functional analysis to determine specific academic and behavior goals and to design strategies to support goal achievement. (5, 6)
  5. Complete a functional analysis of the student's behaviors to define learning and behavior patterns, analyze the probable causes for underachievement, and develop reinforcement interventions to correct the problems and provide intrinsic motivation.
  6. Collaborate with the student, parents, and teachers to complete "The Record of Behavioral Progress" from the *School Counseling and School Social Work Homework Planner* by Knapp to analyze the student's behavior and plan specific intervention strategies to

- help him/her develop positive approaches to learning and academic motivation.
- ▼ 4. Implement management strategies and interventions to help the student become academically motivated and more successful. (7)
  - ▼ 5. Participate in a positive reinforcement program designed to increase prosocial and academic achievement behaviors. (8, 9)
  - ▼ 6. Participate in a program that teaches prosocial behaviors to replace unsuccessful behaviors. (10)
  - 7. Collaborate with teachers to implement *Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports*, which: (1) Uses evidence-based behavioral and academic interventions and supports; (2) Uses data to make decisions and solve problems; (3) Arranges the environment to prevent problem behavior; (4) Teaches prosocial skills; (5) Screens and monitors student performance and progress (see [www.pbis.org](http://www.pbis.org)). ▼
  - 8. Use a Functional Behavioral Analysis to identify target behaviors, followed by positive reinforcement to increase the frequency of desired behaviors (see *Building Positive Behavior Support Systems in Schools: Functional Behavioral Assessment* by Crone and Horner). ▼
  - 9. Coach the teacher in the implementation of the Check-in/Check-out technique, which uses consistent and frequent positive reinforcement of targeted behaviors and repeated monitoring of outcomes to support academic achievement behaviors (see *The Behavior Education Program: A Check-In, Check-Out Intervention for Students at Risk* by Hawken, Petterson, Mootz, and Anderson). ▼
  - 10. Assign the student to participate in the *First Step to Success* program, which uses a behavior coach to work with the student,

peers, teachers, and parents for 50 to 60 hours over a 3-month period to change aggressive, antisocial behaviors through the use of interventions such as Screening, CLASS, and HomeBase (see “Reducing Behavior Problems in the Elementary Classroom” at <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/publications/practiceguides>). ▽

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| <p>▽ 7. Increase the frequency of use of effective academic skills. (11)</p>                            | <p>11. Provide classroom and small group academic skill development lessons with the <i>Student Success Skills</i> program, which teaches goal setting, progress monitoring, success sharing, memory skills development, and healthy optimism (see <a href="http://www.studentsuccessskills.com">www.studentsuccessskills.com</a>). ▽</p>   |
| <p>8. Increase the rate of completion of in-class assignments and homework. (12, 13, 14)</p>            | <p>12. Assign the student to use a study planner to list all assignments, record working time, and check off when completed.</p> <p>13. Ask parents and teachers to monitor the student’s assignment planner daily and give encouragement and direction as needed.</p> <p>14. Assist the student in listing and prioritizing key daily activities at home, school, and in the community; assign times for completion and record in a personal journal or an assignment planner.</p> |
| <p>9. Establish a routine or schedule to prioritize and organize key daily activities. (15, 16, 17)</p> | <p>15. Assist the student in listing and prioritizing key daily activities at home, school, and in the community; assign times for completion and record in a</p>   |

personal journal or an assignment planner.

16. Instruct the student to complete the “Growing and Changing” activity from the *School Counseling and School Social Work Homework Planner* by Knapp to encourage the student to view learning as a lifelong process that begins at birth.
17. Consult with the student, teacher(s), and parents regarding necessary accommodations to encourage academic success (e.g., mentorships or apprenticeships, ability grouping for class projects, provision for continuous progress, accelerated classes, appropriate challenge in curriculum delivery, etc.).
10. Participate in programs designed for gifted or underachieving students in lieu of mainstream classes. (17, 18)
17. Consult with the student, teacher(s), and parents regarding necessary accommodations to encourage academic success (e.g., mentorships or apprenticeships, ability grouping for class projects, provision for continuous progress, accelerated classes, appropriate challenge in curriculum delivery, etc.).
18. Involve the student in a community service project with other students, allowing the group to choose the project and plan for its implementation; encourage the teacher to allow class credit for his/her efforts.
- ▽ 11. Implement problem-solving strategies to improve social interaction, school performance, and personal satisfaction. (19)
19. Teach the student problem solving skills including: pinpointing the problem, brainstorming solutions, listing the pros and cons of each

- possible solution, selecting and implementing a solution, evaluating the outcome and adjusting as necessary (or implement the program *I Can Problem Solve* by Shure or assign the “Personal Problem-Solving Worksheet” from the *School Counseling and School Social Work Homework Planner* by Knapp). ▼
12. Participate in a study skills group. (20, 21, 22)
  13. Verbalize an awareness of the long- and short-term effects of underachievement upon quality of life and goal attainment. (23, 24)
  20. Refer the student to a study skills instructional group.
  21. Teach the student academic skills (e.g., taking notes, using an assignment planner, creating a home study area, choosing creative or meaningful homework projects, etc.).
  22. Explore feelings about academic achievement with the student in a study skills group. Brainstorm the pluses and minuses of underachievement versus successful academic participation (or assign “The Good News and Bad News of Making It in School” activity from the *School Counseling and School Social Work Homework Planner* by Knapp).
  23. Have the student complete the “Decision Making” activity from the *School Counseling and School Social Work Homework Planner* by Knapp either individually or in small group session to increase awareness of the connection between personal choices and specific results.
  24. Have the student begin a personal journal that contains thoughts, feelings, successes, and

- challenges related to academic accomplishment.
14. Verbalize an increased awareness of how personal choices and behavior create specific results. (25, 26)
  15. Implement communication techniques to build social relationships. (27, 28)
  16. Identify successes in schoolwork. (29, 30)
  25. Read children's literature with the student that explains underachievement, explores feelings, and suggests management strategies (e.g., *The Gifted Kids' Survival Guide* by Galbraith, or *The Gifted Kids' Survival Guide: A Teen Handbook* by Galbraith and Delisle).
  26. Instruct the student to list 10 positive academic choices he/she made during the school year and 10 inappropriate or irresponsible choices and record the results of each decision (e.g., decided to study for science test and received an A or didn't turn in homework assignment and received a 0, etc.).
  27. Teach the student to use "I" messages and reflective listening (see *Teaching Children Self-Discipline* by Gordon or the Bug-Wish Technique: "It bugs me when you... I wish you would....").
  28. Use the appropriate grade level of the *Peacemaking Skills for Little Kids Student Activity Book* (Rizzo, Berkell, and Kotzen, Grade 1; Schmidt, Friedman, Brunt, and Solotoff, Grade 2) to develop social assertiveness and conflict management skills.
  29. Ask the student to bring completed assignments to each session and discuss his/her positive efforts.
  30. Review teacher assessments or report cards with the student and



- have him/her relate what personal strengths are being reflected.
17. Chart progress in academic areas. (31)
  18. Verbalize confidence in own test-taking ability and reduced fear of testing. (32, 33)
  19. Demonstrate success in test-taking performance. (32, 33, 34)
  31. Reinforce the idea that academic progress should be measured in terms of personal progress and not by competing against other students. Ask the student to chart his/her progress in several academic areas by establishing a baseline and recording growth throughout the school year in a personal journal (or assign the "Personal Best" activity from the *School Counseling and School Social Work Homework Planner* by Knapp).
  32. Assist the student in identifying and recording several self-talk statements, which can be used during test-taking to ward off worry (e.g., "I am prepared for this test," "I can handle this subject," "I practiced for this at home," or "I've done well on tests like this before").
  33. Encourage the student's use of muscle relaxation and deep breathing techniques during test-taking to reduce stress.
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20. Verbalize the awareness that all people are unique, learn differently, and have various strengths and weaknesses. (35, 36, 37)
21. Parents, teachers, and counselor affirm the student for progress in assuming responsibility and acquiring independence. (38, 39)
34. Process with the student methods used to prepare for a test (e.g., set a study schedule, outline the material, read, write, verbalize, study smaller sections, use flash cards for key ideas or mnemonic devices); assess their effectiveness and revise the preparation routine to prepare for the next test.
35. Explain that people are smart in different ways and ask the student to identify his/her personal areas of strength and challenge; have the student add to his/her personal ability list by soliciting input from others.
36. Ask the student to complete the “Skill Assessment” activity from the *School Counseling and School Social Work Homework Planner* by Knapp to evaluate existing abilities in terms of Multiple Intelligences (Gardner).
37. Ask the student to complete the “Building on Strengths” activity from the *School Counseling and School Social Work Homework Planner* by Knapp to identify personal strengths and discover how these strengths can be used to reach goals.
38. Encourage teachers and parents to give frequent affirmations to the student for progress noted in a private, low-key manner.
39. Allow time during the counseling sessions for the student to develop personal affirmations for progress in school, home, and social adjustment and to share successes with parents, teacher(s), counselor, and group members.

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## DIAGNOSTIC SUGGESTIONS

<u>ICD-9-CM</u>	<u>ICD-10-CM</u>	<u>DSM-5 Disorder, Condition, or Problem</u>
315.00	F81.0	Specific Learning Disorder, With Impairment in Reading
315.1	F81.2	Specific Learning Disorder, With Impairment in Mathematics
315.2	F81.1	Specific Learning Disorder, With Impairment in Written Expression
V62.3	Z55.9	Academic or Educational Problem
314.01	F90.2	Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Combined Presentation
314.00	F90.0	Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Predominately Inattentive Presentation
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