

## **The Basic Plan**

All students have a planner given to them by the school. However, any planner will work. The student is required to write down each assignment for the day in the planner and have that classroom teacher sign it to verify that it is correct. The student will bring home the planner, assignments and books for the necessary classes, show it to parents and do the required work. The student will then show parents the finished work so that everyone is assured the work is complete and that it is the correct assignment.

The student must have a signature for each class, from each teacher, regardless of whether or not there is homework. If there is no homework, the student will write “no homework” for that class and the teacher will sign it if there truly is no homework.

If there is no assignment written, or no signature from a teacher, the student will not have any privileges for that night only. If the student has completed everything discussed up to this point, he or she will have privileges for that night only. Tomorrow is a new day, and the same routine should be followed. Privileges will be determined by completion of the assigned tasks. This should be the routine for every day of the school week.

## **What are Privileges**

Privileges are anything that a student wants to have or do. This could be as simple as a snack at bedtime. Most of the time, they are things like watching television, using the computer (for personal things, not school), going out with friends, going to a dance, talking on the phone, listening to music, getting a new shirt or top (among other purchased items).

Reserve the items that may cost money for the end of the week, month or nine weeks. When a certain goal is reached, a purchase could be a reward. For instance, if they earned privileges for 17 of 20 school days this month, they can get that new CD or outfit they want. Earning privileges for only 16 days won't cut it. Set up the guidelines and stick to them. The activity items can be used on a daily basis.

Remember...anytime a student say's “I want”, or asks “Can I”, that's your clue that they need to work for it somehow.

The student should decide what the privilege earned will be upon completion of the goals that night. The reason for this is that students know what is valuable to them. If parents pick the reward, the student may not be interested in getting it. Parents certainly must agree and approve this. When students earn their privileges, keep them to a minimum. For example, if the privilege earned is talking on the phone, set the limit to maybe 20 minutes. If a student talks on the phone for 2 hours one night, talking on the phone tomorrow may not be important. They accomplished what they wanted to get done in one night. It's the same with the computer, friends, etc. Limit it. You always want them coming back for more.

## Rules

Here are the basic rules to follow:

- No assignments written, no privileges.  
If one class is left out, they have not earned the right to privileges. It's all or nothing.
- No signature, no privileges.  
Same as above. All or nothing.
- No materials to complete assignments, no privileges.  
Kids will say that they forgot this or that at school. This is all part of being responsible.
- "I did it at school."  
For work done in school and completed...the student must bring home the completed work for you to see. If you can't see it and touch it, it does not exist. They should do it again for you to see.
- **DO NOT ARGUE.**  
This is easier said than done sometimes, nevertheless, extremely important. Arguing is an effort to wear you down so that you will give up on the plan and leave them alone to do what they want. The argument is fuel for the student to keep fighting, and they think that as long as you're discussing it and getting frustrated, you might still give in. If you don't argue, they have to give up because you're showing them that you're not changing your mind. Now they have to make a decision...do my work and have privileges, or don't do my work and not have privileges.
- **DO NOT RAISE YOUR VOICE.**  
It's just not necessary. You set up the rules, the student chooses to follow them, or chooses not to follow them. Either way there is an outcome and they have to decide if they want to have privileges that night or not. The other important aspect of this is that you are treating them with respect. Even when they are yelling and arguing...you are modeling the way you want them to treat you. Remind students of this and let them know that they need to act in a more respectful manner if they want to have a discussion.
- Remind them that they have the power to decide.  
They decide to do the work and have privileges, or not do it, and get no privileges. Either way, they have the control of their own life.

- “My teacher refused to sign it”  
If this is the excuse, hold the privileges anyway. You can always make it up later. Call the student’s guidance counselor the next day and find out what really happened. In our experiences, 9 times out of 10, the student never asked for a signature.
- “We had a substitute today. They wouldn’t sign it”  
If the student wants the book signed, all they need to do is ask. Most substitutes are familiar with this plan and many are given instructions for homework. They should sign when asked. Remember, when in doubt, hold the privileges and call the school the next day. The privilege can always be given later.
- Do not accept excuses.  
There is always a way for students to get what they need. If they tell you they have been refused or it’s not their fault, hold the privileges and call the school the next day and talk to someone in the guidance office.

## **Summary**

As a parent you may modify this plan to suit your family’s needs. The basic plan must remain the same: No work, No play. Parents must agree on the plan. If not, the student will see the issue and take advantage of it. DO NOT GIVE UP. This plan may take two or three weeks to show some improvement...or it may take all year. The general idea is that you should prepare to follow the plan for at least the school year. You can start a new school year with or without it, that’s up to you. You can always put the plan into action whenever you want.

It’s also important to make other family members aware of what’s going on, so they do not undermine the plan if they are responsible for the student for any period of time. This may include grandparents, aunts and uncles, older siblings, or neighbors. Everyone involved needs to be clued in so that things remain consistent.

If you ever have questions about the homework plan, or if it doesn’t seem to be working, call the guidance office and they will discuss it with you.

**Junior High East**

**Homework Plan for Parents**