



Student Self-Advocacy Checklist

As early as possible - but no later than the time a student reaches seventh grade- students need to be able to advocate for themselves. Though these skills tend to be more difficult for students with ADHD and Executive Function challenges, fortunately, all of them are teachable.

Particularly for tests, papers and projects, the following self-monitoring and self-advocacy skills are critical.

- The student checks the due date in the instructions and confirms it with the teacher to recognize the relative urgency of a matter, so he/she tackles the project in a timely way.
- The student paraphrases instructions to be sure that he/she understands them and knows what all of the different parts of the assignment are.
- When frustrated or upset, the student suspends disbelief and tries assuming that the teacher wants all students to succeed if they work hard, including her/him.
- Both in class and at home, the student determines any points of confusion and makes notes for questions to bring to the teacher for clarification.
- The student communicates with the teacher (by email if possible) to set a time for help on specific questions.
- In a meeting with the teacher, the student has a reliable method to record (notes, recording pen/app for example) any new information.
- The student asks follow up questions when the explanations aren't making sense to her/him.
- The student constructs a timeline and gets support from someone (a parent, the teacher, or a professional Executive Function/ADHD coach) to ensure follow through.
- The student shows the teacher progress at least once or twice (more for bigger projects) for quality control.

While no single tactic guarantees success, these approaches give students the best chance possible to build a relationship with the teacher, to understand the assignment, and to stay ahead of deadlines. These steps will also help them advocate for themselves for years to come, so they can manage themselves effectively in college and, beyond that, in their work lives one day.