

# turning in assignments

## the problem:

The student consistently neglects to hand in homework or long-term projects, even though she claims to have completed the work.

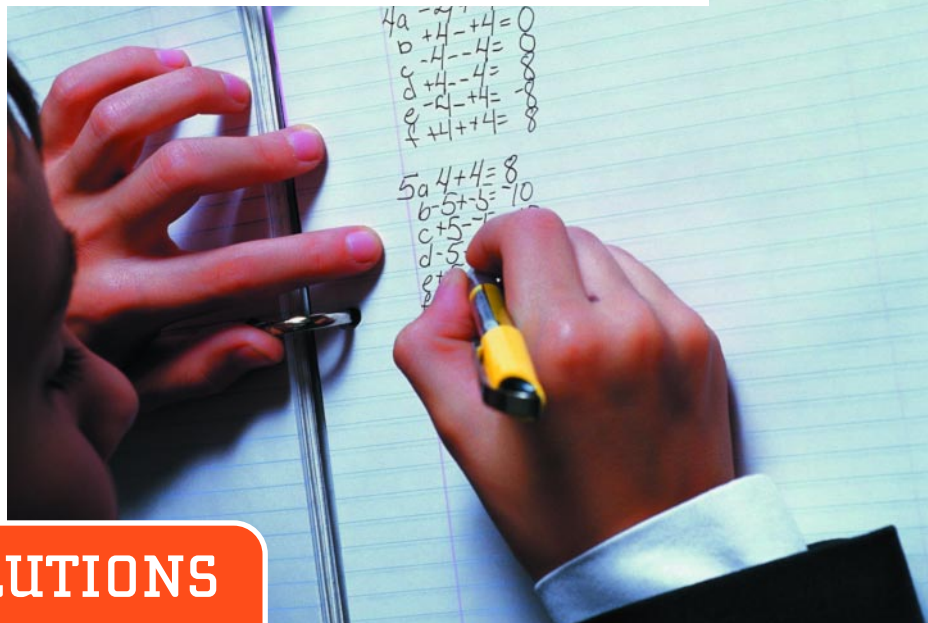
## the reason:

Children with AD/HD have difficulty keeping track of bits of information. They have a problem keeping track of paperwork. This problem is most likely related to a deficiency in their ability to focus on more than one thing at a time. An underactive frontal lobe is the likely cause of these mistakes in memory and processing.

## the obstacles:

Children with AD/HD often want to be compliant but do not have the organizational skills or the memory capacity of other youngsters their age. As their focus shifts from one task to another or one class to another, they may lose the memory of what just transpired. An assignment, from the presentation to handing it in, actually represents many different tasks. Somewhere along the way, AD/HD children get interrupted and forget where they are in the process.

Parents and teachers find this problem puzzling because we assume that, if someone can do something one day, they should have the skill to do it the next day. But mental disorganization causes these children to be inconsistent, leading adults to believe the lapse is intentional. When teachers respond by giving zeroes or bad grades, it only discourages the child and doesn't solve the problem.



## SOLUTIONS

### IN THE CLASSROOM:

**Children with AD/HD need a high degree of supervision and structure in the classroom. A monitoring system that provides students with cues and reminders can help.**

- + Provide homework assignments in writing whenever possible.
- + Use a homework assignment sheet that must be initialed by parent and teacher for oversight and support.
- + For long-term assignments, plan to track the child's progress at different points in the process.
- + Create a "homework folder" in the child's binder to help him remember to bring homework back to school. Use it as a receptacle in which to place all assignments as soon as they are finished.
- + Correct and return homework as soon as possible. Corrections should be positive and instructive.
- + Talk to the child and parent about which supports they think might help. No one plan is effective for all students.

**AT HOME:** Children with AD/HD need a system to help them get from the beginning of a project to the end.

- + Help your child create a checklist of required tasks to help her keep track of where she is in the assignment process. Make copies of the checklist to keep in her binder and post in her room.
- + Label and color-code books, binders, and folders by subject to assist with the organization of paperwork.
- + Establish a routine specifically for the task of getting the assignment back to the teacher (for example, as soon as it is finished, it goes into a folder next to the front door).
- + Don't let your child procrastinate. He will likely need your help to get started on a task and see it through.

Some children desire more independence. Tell yours that she can earn the right to monitor her own work after demonstrating success for a few weeks.

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