

# Parenting Skills

## HOMework PLANNER

- Contains 60 ready-to-copy homework assignments that can be used to facilitate therapy with parents
- Homework assignments and exercises are keyed to the behaviorally based presenting problems from *The Parenting Skills Treatment Planner*
- Assignments are available online for quick customization

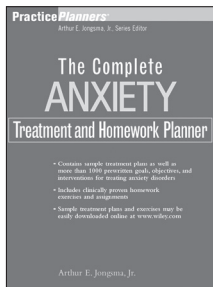
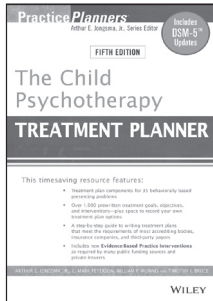
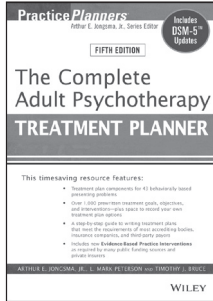
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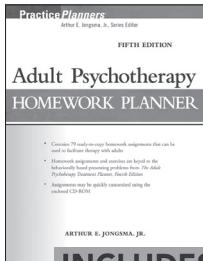
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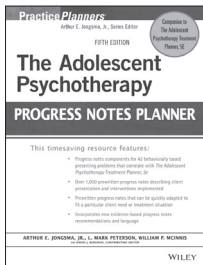
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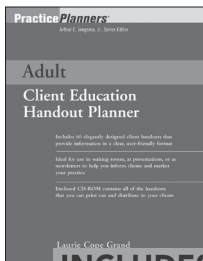
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Arthur E. Jongsma, Jr., Series Editor

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Homework Planner

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Sarah Edison Knapp

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*To parents throughout the world  
who are striving to safely and successfully  
parent their children.*



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# WILEY PRACTICEPLANNERS® SERIES PREFACE

The practice of psychotherapy has a dimension that did not exist 30, 20, or even 15 years ago—accountability. Treatment programs, public agencies, clinics, and even group and solo practitioners must now justify the treatment of patients to outside review entities that control the payment of fees. This development has resulted in an explosion of paperwork.

Clinicians must now document what has been done in treatment, what is planned for the future, and what the anticipated outcomes of the interventions are. The books and software in this Wiley PracticePlanners® series are designed to help practitioners fulfill these documentation requirements efficiently and professionally.

The Wiley PracticePlanners® series is growing rapidly. It now includes not only the original *Complete Adult Psychotherapy Treatment Planner*, third edition, *The Child Psychotherapy Treatment Planner*, third edition, and *The Adolescent Psychotherapy Treatment Planner*, third edition, but also *Treatment Planners* targeted to specialty areas of practice, including: addictions, juvenile justice/residential care, couples therapy, employee assistance, behavioral medicine, therapy with older adults, pastoral counseling, family therapy, group therapy, neuropsychology, therapy with gays and lesbians, special education, school counseling, probation and parole, therapy with sexual abuse victims and offenders, and more.

Several of the *Treatment Planner* books now have companion *Progress Notes Planners* (e.g., Adult, Adolescent, Child, Addictions, Severe and Persistent Mental Illness, Couples, Family). More of these planners that provide a menu of progress statements that elaborate on the client's symptom presentation and the provider's therapeutic intervention are in production. Each *Progress Notes Planner* statement is directly integrated with "Behavioral Definitions" and "Therapeutic Interventions" items from the companion *Treatment Planner*.

The list of therapeutic *Homework Planners* is also growing from the original *Brief Therapy Homework for Adults* to Adolescent, Child, Couples, Group, Family, Addictions, Divorce, Grief, Employee Assistance, School Counseling/School Social Work Homework Planners, and Parenting Skills. Each of these books can be used alone or in conjunction with their companion *Treatment Planner*. Homework assignments are designed around each presenting problem (e.g., Anxiety, Depression, Chemical Dependence, Anger Management, Panic, Eating Disorders) that is the focus of a chapter in its corresponding *Treatment Planner*.

*Client Education Handout Planners*, a new branch in the series, provides brochures and handouts to help educate and inform adult, child, adolescent, couples, and family

clients on a myriad of mental health issues, as well as life skills techniques. The list of presenting problems for which information is provided mirrors the list of presenting problems in the *Treatment Planner* of the title similar to that of the *Handout Planner*. Thus, the problems for which educational material is provided in the *Child and Adolescent Client Education Handout Planner* reflect the presenting problems listed in *The Child Psychotherapy Treatment Planner* and *The Adolescent Psychotherapy Treatment Planner*. Handouts are included online for easy printing and are ideal for use in waiting rooms, at presentations, as newsletters, or as information for clients struggling with mental illness issues.

Adjunctive books, such as *The Psychotherapy Documentation Primer*, and *Clinical, Forensic, Child, Couples and Family, Continuum of Care*, and *Chemical Dependence Documentation Sourcebook* contain forms and resources to aid the mental health practice management. The goal of the series is to provide practitioners with the resources they need in order to provide high-quality care in the era of accountability—or, to put it simply, we seek to help you spend more time on patients, and less time on paperwork.

ARTHUR E. JONGSMA, JR.  
*Grand Rapids, Michigan*



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many thanks to Arthur Jongsma, the series editor and coauthor of the *Treatment Planners*, which have helped hundreds of thousands of therapists in numerous treatment settings. *The Parenting Skills Treatment Planner* and the *Parenting Skills Homework Planner* are a much needed addition to the planner series and are now available due to his foresight, dedication, and diligence. I have often wished that I had these useful therapeutic guides while I was working with children and their parents in the school setting and as a parent trainer. Thanks to Peggy Alexander, vice president and publisher, and her staff at John Wiley & Sons for their support and encouragement. Finally, thank you to my own children, Michael Knapp Jr. and Heather Werkemam, my sisters, Judith Forker and Ann Walz, and my amazing extended family members, for their love, encouragement, good humor, and insight, which helped me understand and appreciate the role of the family in supporting and celebrating all personal efforts. You made it all worthwhile.



# INTRODUCTION

Family counselors and therapists are seeing more and more families with varied and difficult issues to manage and overcome. The role of the family therapist is to assist the parents, children, and other family members in solving the problems that are interfering with the child's successful adjustment within the family, at school, and to life in general. Homework assignments and activities used to reinforce and supplement the counseling sessions help the parents and the child invest in the therapeutic process and take responsibility for the effort necessary to reach the treatment goals.

The assignments provided in this planner are designed to enhance the therapeutic interventions described in *The Parenting Skills Treatment Planner* (Knapp & Jongsma, 2004). The activities will help parents evaluate family problems, utilize positive strategies of discipline that promote responsible behavior, and build positive relationships with their children. These exercises can be assigned as part of the counseling session or as homework between sessions to reinforce the insights and information processed during the individual or group sessions.

Homework activities speed up the attainment of therapeutic goals. Through completion of the assignment the parents become increasingly aware of the process of problem solving and the behavioral changes necessary to reach the therapeutic goals. The activities help the parents and the child to clarify their issues of conflict and detrimental behavior patterns. They empower the family members to become actively involved in attaining social/emotional health. The insight gained as a result of the completed homework can be discussed during subsequent counseling sessions and used as a basis for more productive, successful behavior and thought patterns.

During my 25 years as a social worker in the schools and as a parenting class facilitator, I used numerous written and interactive activities to enhance the therapeutic process with parents and their children of all ages and with varied social-emotional problems. Creating these activities was labor intensive and time consuming. The *Parenting Skills Homework Planner* provides 60 homework activities ready to copy and use with parents and their children. This book will eliminate the hours spent preparing activities for families with a wide range of therapeutic issues.

## USING THIS HOMEWORK PLANNER WITH FAMILIES

Homework activities will help the parents and the child take the therapeutic process seriously and recognize their essential part in creating change. All of the activities are designed to be interesting as well as helpful in resolving therapeutic issues. However,

homework may have a negative connotation to parents who already feel overwhelmed by the demands of work and family obligations. For parents and children who are reluctant to complete additional assignments, it will be helpful to begin the homework activity during the counseling session and to spend time discussing how the assignment will be helpful in addressing the problem. Each exercise should be processed during the next session to reinforce the value of the activity and to acknowledge the family members' time and effort spent completing the homework. If the activity assignment has not been finished, time can be provided during the next session, and reasons for lack of completion can be discussed. This process will help the therapist understand more fully how the family deals with tasks, assignments, and obligations.

Many activities can be used as part of the counseling session and will facilitate dialogue on the particular issues being considered. The activities are designed to be completed by the parents individually or working together with their child.

## ABOUT THE ASSIGNMENTS

There are one or more assignments that correlate directly with each treatment concern presented in *The Parenting Skills Treatment Planner*. These assignments are cited as part of the therapeutic interventions recommended for each identified problem in the *Treatment Planner*. Each activity begins with a Counselor's Overview that cites goals of the exercise, additional homework that may be applicable to the problem, additional problems the exercise may be useful for, and suggestions for using the exercise with the parents and the child. These assignments are ready to copy and use with the family. Each activity provides instructions for the parents and child; however, in most cases these instructions should be covered and clarified during the counseling session. Not all assignments will be applicable to all families. Professional judgment should be used in assigning the activities. Often, homework activities from other sections of the *Parenting Skills Homework Planner* will be applicable to the presenting problem. A cross-reference for additional assignments is provided in the "Alternate Assignments for Presenting Problems Appendix" at the end of the book. All of the assignments can be tailored to fit the individual circumstances and needs of the parents and the child by using the downloadable assignments that accompany the *Homework Planner*. The therapist should feel free to alter the activities to best suit the requirements of the family and the issues being addressed.

It is recommended that the therapist read through the entire book to become familiar with the activities that may be helpful to the parents and the child. If the parents are being seen for several sessions or for an extended period of time, the activities can be kept in a therapeutic journal or notebook for easy reference and review. The notebook will become a record of the progress made during the counseling process, and should be given to the parents upon termination of the sessions.

The activities in the *Parenting Skills Homework Planner* are designed to accompany the therapeutic counseling process and should not be used independently without the guidance of a family counselor or therapist.

Section I

**ABUSIVE PARENTING**



# OUR FAMILY'S SECRET STORY

## GOALS OF THE EXERCISE

1. Disclose the story of the child abuse using the process of journaling.
2. Identify the parents' thoughts and feelings connected with the child's abuse in a supportive, therapeutic environment.
3. Clarify how the abuse has affected all aspects of the family's life.
4. Identify support systems available to help the family deal with the ramifications of the abuse.
5. Prepare for dealing with the abuse and moving ahead with life.

## ADDITIONAL HOMEWORK THAT MAY BE APPLICABLE TO VICTIMS OF CHILD ABUSE

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|--|--|----------|
| • Depression                           | Creating Positive Self-Talk                  | Page 130 |
|  | Managing Positive and Negative Relationships | Page 134 |
| • Grief/Loss                           | Monitoring Our Reactions to Change and Loss  | Page 184 |
|  | Grief and Loss Circle of Support             | Page 188 |
| • Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) | Reframing Our Worries                        | Page 216 |
|  | Physical Receptors of Stress                 | Page 220 |

## ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS THIS EXERCISE MAY BE MOST USEFUL FOR

- Grief/Loss
- Divorce
- Depression
- Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Suicide

## SUGGESTIONS FOR USING THIS EXERCISE WITH PARENTS

Families who have experienced physical or sexual abuse may find it difficult to disclose their personal thoughts and feelings, even to a supportive therapist. The "Our Family's

Secret Story” activity encourages the parents to record their personal ideas privately, in writing, and then share them with the therapist during a counseling session. Journaling allows the parents to record their reactions before disclosing them. The activity lists 25 journal entry starters to help the parents describe the story of abuse in a sequential manner and to consider the most common and relevant aspects of abuse on the child.



## OUR FAMILY'S SECRET STORY

Writing down thoughts and feelings can help sort out the many difficult, challenging, discouraging, or traumatic experiences connected to the history of abuse in the family and its effects upon you and your child. The feelings you experience as a result of any type of abuse are varied and sometimes extremely confusing. By writing down these reactions in a story format or in a personal journal you will begin to understand and make sense of what happened, how the abuse affected you, the child, and the family as a whole, and how you will manage the difficult experience and go on from here. Your written words will help you to express yourself more clearly during your counseling or therapy sessions, and to determine strategies for helping your child cope with the effects of abuse. Remember that your journal is private, and only you can decide whether to share your personal notes. However, therapy will be much more effective if you are willing to share your written thoughts and feelings with your family counselor.

This activity is just a beginning to help you establish the habit of journaling. If you journal regularly you will find that you understand yourself, your spouse, and your child more fully and become better prepared to deal with personal and family challenges. Complete the following starter sentences in order to tell your family's story. If you have additional thoughts and responses to record, use the back of the paper or additional notepaper to describe all of the important aspects of your story.

Answer a few of the following questions each week in order to prepare for your counseling session. You may answer the questions in order or decide which ones to complete each week. Try to find a quiet, peaceful place to do your journaling. After you have completed all of the questions, continue the journaling process by responding to questions developed by you and your counselor—or simply record a couple of paragraphs describing your personal experiences or feelings each day.

1. Describe the family environment before the abuse occurred (e.g., parent/child attachments, sibling relationships, social/emotional problems, discipline challenges, marital conflict).

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2. Is there a previous history or intergenerational pattern of abuse in the family?

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3. Describe the effects of the abuse on the child.

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4. Describe the effects of the abuse on the child's siblings.

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5. Describe how the abuse has affected you.

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6. What was the child's relationship with the perpetrator before the abuse?

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7. When did the abuse first occur?

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8. How long did the abuse go on?

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9. Describe the abuse in your own words.

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10. Describe your thoughts and actions during the time the abuse was occurring.

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11. Describe your emotions, thoughts, and actions after the abuse was disclosed.

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12. How was the abuse discovered?

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13. How did the child feel about disclosing the abuse?

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14. Who helped the child and other family members with the disclosure? (How did they help?)

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15. How did your family and friends react to the disclosure?

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16. Do you think someone could have prevented or stopped the abuse earlier? (Describe who and how.)

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17. How have the family dynamics changed as a result of the disclosure of the abuse?

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18. What has happened to the perpetrator as a result of the abuse?

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19. Do you think this is an appropriate consequence for the perpetrator? (Describe what you think would be appropriate.)

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20. What would you like to say to the perpetrator now?

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21. Who has helped the child and other family members to deal with the abuse?

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22. Have you experienced feelings of guilt, regret, or remorse concerning the abuse? (Describe.)

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23. What other types of help or support do you, the child, and other family members need?

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24. Describe what is needed to help the child and other family members move on and lead a happy and successful life.

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25. Describe the family environment five years from now.

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