



From Concern to Action

OCTOBER 5, 2026 | START HERE + SLIDE 8

How to Advocate for Your Child at School
Presented by Scott | Hosted by Foster the Family

Type in the boxes or print and write. Save a copy before and after filling it out. Use a PDF reader that supports forms. Keep one school concern in mind; sharing personal details is optional.

Your name or initials (optional)

One concern I want to understand

The five steps

- 1 Describe the concern
- 2 Gather useful information
- 3 Prepare and ask
- 4 Agree on next steps
- 5 Follow up

School meeting checklist | Slide 8

Write down my child's strengths.

Choose two or three priorities.

Gather a few relevant examples and label their sources.

Prepare questions and one clear request.

Confirm who should attend.

Arrange language, scheduling, or accessibility support.

Caregiver-role check: Ask the school and appropriate agency or case contact who may participate, receive records, provide consent, and make educational decisions for this child, and what documentation is needed.

Roles or participation support to clarify - and who can help

Practice: One preparation item I will complete

Packet guide: 2 Concern log | 3 Planning | 4 Meeting request | 5 Notes & actions
6 Follow-up | 7 Jordan example | 8 Training notes & Q&A;



Concern & observation log

SLIDES 5-7 | DESCRIBE THE CONCERN + GATHER INFORMATION

Observation = what happened. Interpretation = what you think it means.
Use specific examples. If something is unknown, write "Need to find out."

Practice: "I noticed ... It happened ... It affected ..."

What I noticed (what happened, without assuming why)

When / how often / over what period?

Effect on learning or participation

Who observed or reported it? Include source and date.

Supporting item I have (dated notes, work sample, portal entry, etc.)

My question for the school

Useful information and records

Consider your child's words or preferred communication, teacher observations, work samples, assignment records, dated home notes, and existing school plans. Label each with its date and source.

What is missing?

Who can help locate it? What will I ask?

Keep different concerns or sources in separate entries. Reuse this page for another entry.
Ask what support could help while information is being gathered.



Meeting planning worksheet

SLIDES 9, 11-12 & 17 | PREPARE AND ASK

Start with strengths, include your child's perspective, and choose two or three priorities.
Your child can communicate by talking, drawing, writing, or another comfortable method.

One strength or interest I want the team to know

My child's words / communication, or a question I want to ask

Ask: What feels easiest? When is it hard? What helps? What should adults understand?

Priority 1

Priority 2

Desired outcome / specific support question (Slide 11)

Try: "What happens during ____? What could help? Could we agree on a support to try, what we will observe, and when we will review it?"

A phrase I want to use if the conversation is difficult (see page 5)

My concern, request, and next step | Slide 17

I have noticed ...

I would like us to ...

By [date], I will contact [person] to [action] ...



A clear meeting request

SLIDE 10 | PREPARE AND ASK

Open with a strength. Share specific observations. Ask for a clear next action.
Add your availability and any language or accessibility support you need.

Sample message | Jordan is a fictional example

Subject: Meeting request about Jordan's school participation

Hello [teacher's name],

Jordan enjoys science and hands-on activities. Over the past two weeks, I have noticed distress before school on four mornings, and the assignment portal lists five incomplete assignments.

Could we meet to compare what we are seeing and discuss support for getting started on classwork?

Please suggest a few meeting times and let me know who else should join.

Thank you,

[Caregiver's name]

Practice: Draft three sentences you can use

Who I will contact

Subject line

I'm requesting a meeting to discuss ...

I have noticed ...

I would like us to ...

Availability / support I need to participate



Meeting notes & action tracker

SLIDES 12-14 & 16 | AGREE ON NEXT STEPS

Before leaving, confirm the action, person, target date, progress information, and review date.

"Let me read back what I have so we can check it together."

Meeting date

People attending / roles

Notes: What did we learn? What remains unresolved?

Our agreed action | Reuse this page for each additional action

Action: What will happen?

Responsible person: Who will do it?

Target date: When will it start / finish?

Progress information: What will we observe or record?

Review date and who will participate

Unresolved item: Who will clarify, by when?

Phrases to keep nearby

Different observations: "Can we compare specific examples?"

Hearing no: "Can you explain the concern with this request and what other options we can consider?"

Unfamiliar term: "What does that mean for my child during the school day?"

Need time: "I would like time to review this and understand the next step."

Unclear plan: "What will we try, who will coordinate it, and when will we review how it is working?"



Follow up & review

SLIDES 14-16 | FOLLOW UP

Keep the original request, notes, and follow-ups together. At review, ask whether the action happened, what the observations show, what your child says, and what should change.

Language you can adapt

After a meeting: "Thank you for meeting. My understanding is that [person] will [action] by/from [date]. We will track [observations] and review on [date]. Please let me know if I missed or misunderstood anything."

No response: "I'm following up on my [date] request about [concern]. Could you reply by [requested date] with possible meeting times or direct me to the appropriate person?"

Action has not happened: "Our notes listed [action] for [date]. Could you update me? If the timing has changed, please suggest a new date."

Concern continues: "We tried the agreed support, and this is what remains difficult. Can we review what we learned and discuss the next step?"

Choose a reasonable reply date. A requested reply date is a scheduling request, not a legal deadline or required waiting period.

My follow-up message / question

Where I will save messages

My follow-up reminder date / method

Review notes: Action happened? Evidence? Child's view? Continue or change?

Still no response? Check the contact information, try another available contact method, and ask the school office who handles the concern. If no clear next step emerges, ask which school or district contact can help. Keep a record of dates and contacts.



Jordan: a completed example

SLIDES 4, 7, 9 & 14 | REFER BACK THROUGHOUT THE TRAINING

Jordan is 9 and recently changed schools. All details, words, and dates below are fictional. Use this example to see how observations become questions and a specific plan.

Start with the child | Slide 4

Strengths: Enjoys science and hands-on activities.

Concerns: Upset before school on four mornings over two weeks; five assignments appear incomplete. Previous school records are still being gathered.

Opening question: What are we each noticing, and what would help us understand Jordan's experience?

Completed concern-log entry | Slide 7

Entry date / period: September 28 / two weeks.

Observation: Jordan cried before school on four mornings.

Impact: Needed extra time and reassurance to leave home.

Source / evidence: Caregiver's dated notes identifying those four mornings.

Question: "What are you noticing when Jordan arrives?"

The assignment records would be a separate entry because the source differs.

Perspective and priorities | Slide 9

Jordan says: "Sometimes I don't know what I'm supposed to do first."

Priorities: Understand difficult mornings; identify support for beginning classwork.

Desired outcome: Agree on support to try and a date to review it.

Completed action plan | Slide 14

Action: Check that Jordan understands the first step during independent science work.

Responsible person: Classroom teacher.

Target dates: Begin October 6 and continue through October 19.

Progress information: Note whether Jordan begins after the check and what additional help is needed.

Review: Teacher and caregiver review observations on October 20.

Keep the remaining concern visible: This plan addresses starting classwork. The difficult mornings still need their own agreed next step.

What I want to borrow from this example



Training notes & questions

SLIDES 1-3 & 18 | USE THROUGHOUT THE WEBINAR

You do not need every answer before you begin. One manageable action is enough.
During Q&A, leave out names and identifying details about children, families, and schools.

Ideas, phrases, or examples I want to remember

Questions I want to ask / answers I want to remember

Other concerns to return to later

Stay connected

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Recording: Foster the Family will email the link and post it on its website.