

Pattern Recognition Tracker

A printable set of tools for noticing meaningful patterns in your child's nervous system – and knowing when to support, when to wait, and what to try next.

How to use:

Start with the 5-Day Pattern Tracker. Then complete the Context Investigation, fill out the Family Worksheet, and keep the Quick Reference Checklist handy. Think of "3+ similar occurrences" as a clue—not a rule.

5 Day Pattern Tracker

Use for new or unclear observations. Each day gets its own page section with generous space for notes.

Date:

Environment/Location:

How long did you observe:

What happened (describe observable behaviors & context)		
Leading factors (sleep, hunger, sensory load, transitions, stressors)		
Child's response (what they did/said; body cues)		
What we tried (supports/changes)		
Outcome (what helped, what didn't)		
Approx. intensity (1 - 5):		
Notes to revisit:		

Pattern Analysis (after 5 days)

What was consistent?

What varied?

Possible triggers or factors?

What need might this reflect?

Context Investigation

When a possible pattern shows up, scan these domains. Tick what applies and add notes.

Environment	Internal State	Systems/Routine
☐ Specific locations (which?)	☐ Tired / low sleep	☐ Family routine/schedule changes
☐ Sensory factors (sound, light, texture, crowd)	☐ Hunger / blood sugar timing	☐ Expectations increased recently
☐ Time-of-day component	☐ Illness / discomfort / pain	☐ Affects multiple children or just one
☐ Specific people or social dynamics	☐ Recent stressors or changes	☐ School/childcare changes
	☐ Developmental leap/challenge	

Response & Support

- What happens when we modify environment?
- How child responds to support offered?
- Child's view: what do they say they need?

☐ **Notes:**

Family Pattern Recognition Worksheet

What we noticed?

CLEAR Framework Analysis

- C Consistent? (repeats under similar conditions)
- L Logical? (plausible nervous-system link)
- E Environmental? (clear context/trigger)
- A Actionable? (something helpful to try)
- R Respectful? (honors dignity/growth)

Pattern Classification

- Meaningful pattern consistent, logical, actionable
- Normal variation developmental/situational
- Need more information observe longer
- Situational response tied to specific event

Next Steps

Environmental tweak to try

Sensory/Regulation support

Timing/Transition adjustment

If observing longer: how long? what info will we gather? how we'll review as a family

Quick Reference: Pattern vs. Normal Variation

Likely a Meaningful Pattern

- Happens repeatedly in similar conditions (think "3+ times" as a clue, not a rule)
- Makes sense developmentally/neurologically
- Clear environmental or timing factors
- Suggests specific supports or changes
- Helps us understand communication

Likely a Normal Variation

- Inconsistent or rare
- Tied to temporary stressors or phases
- Developmentally typical for age
- Does not impair daily functioning
- Resolves naturally without intervention

Need More Information

- Too new / multiple explanations
- Contradictory evidence or mixed contexts
- Child in major transition (school, sleep, growth)
- Significant family or routine changes

Principles: Patterns reveal needs (not deficits) • Stay curious • Support when helpful, observe when enough • Trust your child's wisdom • Expect patterns to evolve.

