

MOTHERING



A Family Decision Council: Let Children Have a Voice Without Handing Them Adult Burdens



A PRACTICAL COMPANION TO THE GUIDE

Run a short family decision council with clear adult responsibilities, child participation, a decision record, and a printable meeting and follow-through workbook.

HOW TO USE THESE PAGES

- 01 Read the guide and choose one manageable starting point.
- 02 Complete the six exercises with details from your own home.
- 03 Return to the record and keep the adjustment that helped.

Small enough to begin. Specific enough to use again.

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EXERCISE 01



One decision with real room for choice

Write the question and the reason it matters this week. Remove accusations and unrelated problems. List which parts are fixed by safety, care, money, or schedule. Then list the choices that are actually available. If there are no meaningful choices, prepare a clear adult explanation instead of calling a council that cannot change the outcome.

YOUR WORKING RECORD

DECISION / NEXT ACTION / CHECK DATE

EXERCISE 02

Each person's need and proposal

Give each person space for one difficulty and one suggestion. Allow writing, drawing, or passing. Record the speaker's own wording before interpreting it. Check a summary with them. Do not force a child to disclose private matters to justify a preference. The council concerns the shared decision, not an audit of everything each person feels.

YOUR WORKING RECORD

DECISION / NEXT ACTION / CHECK DATE

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EXERCISE 03



Compare the options fairly

Use the same three checks for every idea: feasible, safe, and clear ownership. Add the practical consequence for the person who will do the work. A popular option may still be unfair if it gives one person every reset task. Identify any purchase or outside dependency. Eliminate unavailable options before asking children to choose among them.

YOUR WORKING RECORD

DECISION / NEXT ACTION / CHECK DATE

EXERCISE 04

Write a trial agreement

Record the chosen action, who owns it, when it begins, and the review date. For the table example, name the portable board's exact resting place and the time it moves. Replace vague words such as 'soon' or 'help more' with visible actions. The agreement should be short enough for the child who uses it to explain it back.

YOUR WORKING RECORD

DECISION / NEXT ACTION / CHECK DATE

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EXERCISE 05

Record failures without rewriting history

Make a brief note each day: kept, partly kept, or blocked by a specific condition. Include the adult's missed handoff as honestly as the child's. Do not revise the original agreement to make a later complaint look like something everyone already accepted. A clear baseline helps the review produce a repair rather than another argument about what was said.

YOUR WORKING RECORD

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EXERCISE 06

Review and choose one adjustment

Ask what worked, what was difficult, and which single change would improve the next week. Keep necessary limits intact. If the trial cannot work, end it explicitly and choose another feasible arrangement. A child can contribute useful information while the adult makes the final responsibility check. Record the updated agreement so nobody has to rely on competing memories.

YOUR WORKING RECORD

DECISION / NEXT ACTION / CHECK DATE
