My Habit Detective

Lots of kids have a habit their hands do without asking. Noticing it is the first superpower.

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

1 What my hands do

Tick what is true for me. This is not bad or gross. It is a habit

- [ ] Pick my skin
- [ ] Pick scabs
- [ ] Pull my hair
- [ ] Pull eyelashes
- [ ] Bite my nails
- [ ] Chew lips or cheek
- [ ] Pick at cuticles
- [ ] Something else

2 When it happens most

Detectives look for clues. When do my hands get busy?

- [ ] Watching screens
- [ ] Homework or reading
- [ ] In bed at night
- [ ] In the car
- [ ] When I'm bored
- [ ] When I'm worried
- [ ] When I'm tired
- [ ] At the mirror

3 What I feel just before

Sometimes there is a feeling first. Sometimes I just don't notice

- [ ] Itchy or tingly
- [ ] A bumpy spot
- [ ] Hair feels wrong
- [ ] Bored
- [ ] Worried
- [ ] Tense or wound up
- [ ] Nothing at all
- [ ] I don't notice

4 My detective notes

Where on my body, and what I notice first

Where on my body: _____

The first clue I notice: _____

My hands are most busy at: _____

Draw me as a habit detective, with my magnifying glass:

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My Busy Hands Plan

When I catch my habit, I give my hands a different job. Catching it counts, every time.

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

1 Catch it, swap it

Notice, then give my hands a job for one minute, until the urge gets smaller

- [ ] Make soft fists
- [ ] Squeeze putty
- [ ] Hold a fidget
- [ ] Press fingertips
- [ ] Sit on my hands
- [ ] Hold a stress ball
- [ ] Doodle or color
- [ ] Rub a smooth stone

My best swap: _____

My catch it words: _____

2 My helpers and blockers

Things that make the habit harder to start. Choose with my grown up

- [ ] Bandages on fingers
- [ ] Gloves at bedtime
- [ ] Short, smooth nails
- [ ] Hat or hood
- [ ] Fidget nearby
- [ ] Lotion for dry skin
- [ ] Less mirror time
- [ ] A secret signal

3 My practice week

Color a star each time I catch it or use my swap. Catching counts, even late

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
I caught it	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆
I used my swap	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆
I asked for help	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆

4 For the grown up helper

On the same team as your child, against the habit

Skip nagging, slapping hands away or punishing. Shame tends to push the habit into hiding.

Agree on a kind, private signal, and praise catching it, even after the fact.

Look after skin and hair: keep nails short, clean picked spots and cover them if needed.

See your pediatrician for infections, bald patches, eating hair or if your child is very upset.

Ask about a therapist trained in habit reversal or behavior therapy for BFRBs.

US: crisis, call or text 988. Emergency, call 911. These pages do not replace professional care.

Grown up notes: when and where it happens, swaps and blockers that help, progress to share with the pediatrician or therapist

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