



Goal-setting

Do you know that being able to identify and plan the steps needed to work towards achieving a goal is one of the most highly correlated traits of peak performers and successful individuals? But goal-setting isn't just for adults. Studies show that goal-setting can help young people gain a sense of discipline and internal drive to stay motivated and complete tasks. Goal-setting can also help children learn from their failures and increase the likelihood of task completion and the probability of success.

Being able to set and accomplish goals gives your children control over the way they change and grow. This allows them to feel independent, self-reliant and confident about taking care of themselves and contributing to their surroundings in a positive way. Knowing they can take care of the basic tasks that daily life requires will increase their confidence to face unexpected challenges in life.

Here are simple ways to help children understand what goals are, and why using them can enhance their chances of success.

- Be a good listener. Your children will be more willing to include you in their goal-setting process if you show that you are actively listening to them talk.
- A simple goal formula is: *I will + What + When*. Goals usually start with the words 'I will' and have two parts – the 'what' that explains what you want to accomplish and the 'when' which tells when you intend to accomplish it.
- Learning how to set a SMART goal is a little more complex and looks like this:
 - Specific** – What would you like to accomplish?
 - Measurable** – How will you know when your goal has been achieved?
 - Action orientated** – Is your goal realistic?
 - Realistic** – Why is the goal significant to you?
 - Timeframe** – When will you achieve this goal?
- Ask your child questions to help them determine what type of support or resources they might need to achieve their goals.
- Find out if your child has anticipated any potential obstacles and how they can seek a solution.
- Discuss and check if their goal and the steps they have in mind to achieve it are realistic.
- Discuss making a schedule or timeline to go along with the plan to achieve the goal.

- Nothing is more affirming to children than succeeding at goals they have worked hard to achieve. It's the tangible proof your child interprets as, "I really did it!" and a great way to nurture your child's self-confidence.
- While achieving a goal can be its own reward, celebrate them as a family. Celebrate how your child's life is different and better because of their hard work.
- Make it clear to your children that goals are not 'set in stone' and that it's okay to change a goal.
- The more children can think through their goal and identify what they need to do to achieve success, the greater the chance they will succeed.

