

SETTING UP AND ACHIEVING POSITIVE GOALS

STARTING SMALL AND CELEBRATING OFTEN

When celebrating our students and giving them praise, it is important to know what kinds of things we should praise:



- ◆ Putting in lots of effort
- ◆ Using strategies to tackle difficult tasks
- ◆ Not giving up, especially when something is difficult
- ◆ Learning from past mistakes and doing things differently

When it comes to setting goals, there are short-term goals and long-term goals.

Long-term goals can seem scary, especially if they require doing lots of things that feel overwhelming when considered at one time. We can strengthen goal-setting skills by starting small and celebrating those small successes along the way.

Short-term goals can also be designed individually. Consider the following samples:

Is your student...	Then try this type of goal:
...struggling to finish schoolwork?	Break the tasks into small chunks and celebrate when these smaller chunks are complete.
...easily distracted?	Set a time-based goal and celebrate when the student successfully maintains focus for the agreed-upon timeframe. Try extending these timeframes based on former successes.
...struggling to get along with a teacher?	Encourage your student to schedule a conference to talk with the teacher one-on-one about how to improve academically. Support your student in reaching those new goals and, as always, celebrate success.
...having a hard time with a specific academic subject, like learning the multiplication tables?	See if you can turn practice into something fun — such as playing games with flashcards. If the student successfully practices for a given amount of time, praise the student for the effort.
...having difficulty with time management?	Create an evening homework schedule each night after school. If the student sticks to the schedule, offer a reward.

The more children experience success with short-term goals, the more resilience they will build for tackling longer-term goals. Start small and provide support all along the way.

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