

Student Support Department

WAYS TO MOTIVATE YOUR CHILD

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Why is it so hard to motivate children? As parents, we often have a funny, inaccurate belief that our children won't care unless we twist their arms. But the simple truth is that your attempts to motivate your child are probably working against you.

As parents, we often feel responsible for our child's outcome in life, but understand that this is never the case—ultimately, your child is responsible for his /her own choices. But because we think our children's success depends on us, we step into a place where we don't belong. We're taught that we need to somehow control our kids, so we often jump in their box without a second thought. We think we're supposed to motivate our children to want certain things in life, but that only causes them to function in reaction to you. Your child might comply to get you off his back or even to please you, but that doesn't help him get self-motivated. Again, you definitely want to inspire and influence your child. The goal is the same: we want our kids to be motivated—it's how we get there that makes the difference.

HOW TO DO IT?

1. Set Goals.

Have them set goals. Make a list of short-term goals and one for the long-term goals. Make sure the goals are reachable but require effort to obtain. And be sure you're helping your children choose the right goals.

2. Make a Plan.

In order to reach goals, you need a plan. Help your children create a strategy for reaching their goals. Make a step-by-step plan to reach them.

3. Celebrate Accomplishments.

When your children accomplish their goals, let them know that you are proud of them. Celebrate these successes together. A sense of accomplishment is the best reward.

4. Encourage Them.

Let your children know you believe in them. Tell them how great they are going to do. Dismiss any self-doubt or fears they may have.

5. Take Interest.

Learn about your child's interests. Talk to your child about them and listen. It will show your children that you care and that they are free to talk to you about their interests

6. Discover Passion.

Encourage your children to discover what he or she is passionate about. It may take a few tries along the way. Support your child on the journey toward passion and urge him or her to keep going until he or she finds out what it is.

7. Remain Positive.

Maintain a positive and optimistic outlook for your children. If they see fear or doubt in your eyes, they likely will lose self-confidence. Having a positive approach will brighten their outlooks on a situation.

8. Excite Them.

Excite your children about their goals and ambitions. Show that you are excited for them, too. The positive energy and adrenaline will push them to continue their hard work and be happy with their efforts.

