

Motivation

Each year we begin hopeful that this year will be “our year”; that our performances will meet with and perhaps even exceed our expectations. There are many ways in which you can help your child/ren to maintain their motivation.

Highly motivated people choose tasks that are challenging, begin tasks without having to be reminded, show effort and concentration, have a positive attitude towards learning, use coping strategies to get through the difficult times and stick with tasks until completion.

Parents have a significant role to play in helping children to achieve their best. In the end it is up to him/her but you can create an encouraging environment. What you can do to help:

- Set realistic expectations by listening to your child’s ideas about their strengths, perceived abilities and interests and talking about these before offering your opinions. Never dismiss your child’s self-assessment no matter how inaccurate you perceive it to be! The focus of your highest expectations for achievement needs to be the areas where you and your child believe their strengths are and should be on effort rather than results.
- Goals help turn expectations from ideas into reality. Assist your child to set meaningful goals and encourage your child to write them down as this will provide a visual reminder. Follow up with an agreed “map” of how the goal can be achieved including times for practice and who can help.
- Create a suitable environment for study, be aware of homework/assignment time frames and speak in positive ways about your child’s learning experiences. Help your child to see that learning happens with you as well as at school. Attending cultural events and extending your child’s interests by taking them to something that does not fit with their current interests helps to expand their breadth of experience.
- Notice effort and describe exactly what was achieved rather than using opinion words such as “wonderful” and “great”. Being sympathetic when performance may not meet with expectation is important. Responses such as, “That didn’t work out the way you planned? I can see you are disappointed. What do you think you would do differently next time?” demonstrate unconditional love and help to develop resilience. On that point, resilience will develop in a child when he/she
 - has a strong belief that an adult in their lives will always be there with love and support
 - has the ability to solve many of their own problems
 - can focus on their own strengths and
 - can regard their mistakes as something that happens to everyone and are something to learn from.

Wishing you all a year of high motivation for whatever you and your children want to achieve.

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