

Keeping Your Eye on the Goal

■ onTRAC® Planning

Think—what's important right now?

What do you want to do in the future? What does your child want to do in the future? If you or your child wants to achieve a dream, what steps are important to take right now? Remember: anyone can achieve his or her dreams by turning them into goals and taking the first step today!

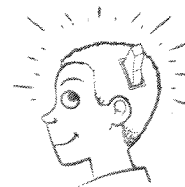
Setting Goals

Both younger and older students can learn to set and achieve goals. Not only will setting goals help them fulfill their dreams, but it will also give them a step up in life. Research shows that people who set, work toward, and achieve goals are often more successful than those who don't focus on goals.

To help your child get in the habit of setting goals, why not try setting a short-term goal with your child. Pick something in which you are both interested and work out the steps needed to achieve it together. Your combined success on a goal might be the catalyst your child needs to continue to set more elaborate goals in the future. Don't forget to celebrate together when your goal is achieved!

SMART goals

The acronym SMART has helped many people define their goals and increase their chances of success. This acronym encourages people to set goals that are Specific (think about the who, what, when, where, and why of the goal), Measurable (consider how you will know when the goal is achieved), Action-oriented (remember that goals require action on your part), Realistic (set goals that are doable), and Timely (don't forget that without a timeline there is no urgency to complete the goal). Share the SMART acronym with your child. Help your child evaluate several of his or her goals using the acronym as a guideline.



Is your brain turned on? THINK about what you're learning and how it will power you this year!

Many factors contribute to a child's growth and success. Below are tips and ideas for practicing skills that promote your child's academic, social, and emotional well-being outside the classroom.

■ Character

It's not always easy to take accountability for actions—especially ones that have resulted in mistakes—but doing so helps people live by their personal values. Teach your child the value of accountability and self-discipline by explaining that it is a way for us to evaluate our actions and make sure they align with our personal goals and beliefs.

■ Health

Good fitness is essential for creating a healthy body. Exercising also helps boost your immune system, prevents many diseases, and helps regulate your moods! Help your child identify the non-physical benefits of physical activity. Create a list of activities you can do each week as a family.

■ Anti-bullying

Help your child be prepared to deal with bullying by talking about situations before they happen. Brainstorm things to say or do when your child or someone else is hurt or threatened verbally, physically, or socially, at school, after school, or even on the Internet. Students should report bullying to adults and refuse to join when other students are bullied.

■ STEM

Our society is fueled by disposable goods. The impact this can have on our environment plays into a very real topic—waste management. Everything we throw away has to go somewhere! Help your child understand where waste goes once it leaves your house. Talk about the 3Rs and help your child learn about the various systems in your community to remove waste.

■ Study Skills

Critical thinking is an essential life skill. It not only forms the basis of good decision making and problem solving, but also helps students make learning connections. However, developing critical thinking takes practice. Help your student practice this skill by teaching him or her to ask questions and share opinions about situations that arise each day.

■ Learning Strategies

It is important for students to discover the relationship between effort and achievement and begin to appreciate why working hard is worthwhile. Help your child learn how recognition for completing specific goals or mastering particular tasks motivates them to continue working hard.

Staying Organized in a Busy World

■ onTRAC® Planning

Record—important events

Even students who are generally organized can start to get overwhelmed as they progress through their school career and are expected to become more and more responsible for organizing their own schedules, activities, homework, and other events. Remind your child to stay organized by recording important events in one place. A little organization makes life go more smoothly!

Organizing life

When the space we live and work in is organized, it is easier to keep our activities and priorities organized too. Therefore, ensure that your child's physical space is in order. Insist that he or she keeps his or her room organized and has a regular workspace in which to do his or her homework. This space should be neat, away from distractions like TV and game systems, big enough to spread out work, and stocked with necessities such as pencils, crayons, a calculator, and paper. When students keep their physical space organized it creates an environment which is more conducive to the organization of schedules, priorities, and activities as well.

Visibility keeps it fresh

The key to keeping homework and other priorities organized is to record everything in one place so that the information is visible and easily accessible. A planner



No matter what sport, teams keep score. It's easier to keep your own score when you RECORD!

is an ideal tool for students to use for this purpose. Your child's onTRAC® planner is specifically designed to help keep information visible and organized. Has your child not yet gotten in the habit of using a planner or fallen out of the habit of using one? If either of these scenarios is true, encourage your child to make use of his or her planner. Planners are excellent organizational tools. Research shows that students who write down their priorities will be more organized, less stressed, and better students overall.

Many factors contribute to a child's growth and success. Below are tips and ideas for practicing skills that promote your child's academic, social, and emotional well-being outside the classroom.

■ Character

Students' actions, attitudes, and choices can have a huge impact on their lives. When they have a positive attitude, use self-affirming language, and make choices that support their values and beliefs, they work toward being responsible citizens. Talk to your child about responsible choices he or she made this week and the impact they had on his or her life.

■ Health

The F.I.T.T. Principle has four components. (Frequency, Intensity, Time, Type). Help your child incorporate the components into short-term goals to be active for at least 60 minutes each day! Encourage your child to use the planner to track different types of activities he or she did or wants to do, how long he or she did them, and whether or not goals were met.

■ Anti-bullying

Students who appear different are often teased, picked on, or bullied. Help your child learn tolerance by teaching him or her to appreciate differences and treat others with respect. Look for opportunities to build your child's self-esteem. Students who are confident are less likely to bully and more likely to stand up for themselves and their peers.

■ STEM

Water is necessary for the survival of all living things. What might seem like an abundant resource is in danger of becoming endangered and possibly extinct—like the dinosaurs. Talk to your child about all the ways you use water (to drink, shower, do laundry). Ask him or her to imagine a world without water and discuss ways to conserve this valuable resource.

■ Study Skills

Solving problems requires creative thinking and determination, as well as knowledge of academic concepts. Help your child practice problem-solving skills in a real-world context. Bake together. Play games that reinforce math skills. Have your child help with basic home repairs. Or plan a party and let your child help decide what food and supplies are needed.

■ Learning Strategies

Cooperative learning is a critical strategy students need to learn in order to work successfully in team environments. Help your child develop the skills they need to interact with their peers in situations that promote positive interdependence and individual accountability.