

Children First

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By

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“Working with education leaders to keep children first.”

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A Job for Parents

The most responsible job we can ever have is to be a good parent. While there is a very long list of responsibilities parents should undertake while raising their children, one item critical to future success is learning how to set and carry out personal goals. Goal setting is a key component of success. Action on goals is how success is brought into reality.

Study the steps outlined below and seek ways to implement the techniques shared into your life and the life of each of your children. Setting goals is seldom taught in our schools and in the home. Don't take this responsibility lightly. It's very important and very effective if done properly. Separate your family from the normal household and teach this skill. I promise it will make a world of difference in the future success of your child.

Types of Goals

Goals can be divided into six general categories: They are:

1. **Physical / Health Goals**: Many children are addicts to video games and TV. The result is that a large percentage of children are over weight and under conditioned. Teaching them to appreciate the advantages of good health literally extends years to their life. First, you must be a good example of a physically conditioned and healthy parent. Obesity in adults is likewise very widespread (no pun intended). Be conscious of the dietary habits of your child and strongly encourage them to be physically active. Sporting activities are the best conditioner but simple, regular exercise is also effective. Get them out of the house and into the yard. Work together to develop a healthy lifestyle and a physically trim body.
2. **Self-Development Goals**: Life should be a perpetual learning experience. Taking full advantage of our ability to learn is best accomplished when we have a reason to drive our desire to build knowledge. Goals in this area focus on information that enhances our ability to succeed. For example, learning how to maximize our time use is one self-development habit that pays tremendous dividends. Learning more about leadership might be a goal to help your child become a student leader in their school.
3. **Career Goals**: We have to earn money to live and our career choice provides those finances. The better the choice, the greater our return on investment.

Matching talents with careers is the best option to pursue. Doing what we enjoy makes work a pleasure. On the other hand, working at a miserable job is both mentally and physically draining. Helping children make the proper career choice demands advance preparation and study. Start in elementary school to expose career options. Don't set limitations. Just explore choices.

4. **Social / Family Goals:** We are social animals. A family setting involves interaction with others. As a family, what are the accomplishments you'd like to see become reality? A family should set goals that share the responsibility for their accomplishment. Everyone may have their individual goals but collectively, these goals make family life better for all. Social goals involve family activities or activities pursued by individual family members outside the home.
5. **Financial Goals:** For my money (pun intended), teaching your children how to properly handle their finances is one of the most important skills a parent can develop. We all have to deal with money. Mastering the skills of developing and working with a budget and prioritizing spending is a necessity. Understanding the significance of saving today for tomorrow's needs separates one from a vast majority of people. Don't neglect teaching this skill.
6. **Spiritual Goals:** This is the grounding goal. Without a strong spiritual base, your life is incomplete. Regular attendance at church and a strong prayer life are two of many spiritual elements under which goals can be set. Bring greater peace to your child through spiritual goals.

Start small and grow to more complex task accomplishment. You want your children to experience early successes. As confidence builds, they will automatically attempt more challenging goals. Teach them to cope with failure but always remind them that great successes are always just past great failures.

Less than 10% of people drive their life with goals yet every great success in life includes goal setting. Let the power of that sentence sink in. Helping your child master this process is probably the greatest goal you can set as a parent. What are you waiting for? Do it!

Concepts for Setting Goals

1. We must have a strong desire to accomplish a goal. So parents, let your children set their own goals. Don't impose your goals on them. Ownership drives us.
2. We must believe we can accomplish a goal. No belief, no accomplishment!
3. Goals should be written, specifically stated, measurable and have an accomplishment date.
4. Start small but move to challenging goals.
5. Make your goals balanced by setting goals in all six areas previously discussed.
6. Identify the benefits gained from accomplishing a goal.
7. What obstacles could stop you from accomplishing your goals? What new knowledge will you have to learn? Who can help?
8. List action steps under each goal.

9. Reflect & Evaluate the results of your actions daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly. Adjust as needed. If something works, continue using it. If something does not work, stop doing it. It really is that simple.
10. Visualize yourself succeeding. See, taste, and feel the fruits of your labor.
11. Never give up. Persist until you succeed. Persistence pays. Giving up robs.
12. Celebrate the joy of accomplishment.

Checkout Billy

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Dare To Risk

In past issues, I’ve shared poems from a variety of sources. Here is another one that fits well into the theme of this issue. It was passed on by a friend almost ten years ago but unfortunately does not identify the author.

To Dare

To laugh is to risk appearing the fool.

To weep is to risk appearing sentimental.

To reach for another is to risk involvement.

To expose your ideas, your dreams, before a crowd is to risk their loss.

To love is to risk not being loved in return.

To live is to risk dying.

To believe is to risk failure.

But risks must be taken, because the greatest hazard in life is to risk nothing.

They may avoid suffering and sorrow, but they cannot learn, feel, change, grow, love live.

Chained by their attitudes, they are slaves; they have forfeited their freedom.

Only a person who risks is free.

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