

# Take action with practical tips to achieve goals

## Practical Tips and other ways to help your child succeed

As a parent, you see your child's talents and abilities better than anyone and you want to make sure everyone sees him or her the same way you do. The following pages offer useful tips to get you started — **including 10 Practical tips to help your child improve their organizational skills and focus at school and at home** — and to work with your child's teacher to help your child do the best he or she can do every day.

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### Coaching your child to succeed

You may want to think of yourself as your child's coach.

As his or her coach, your role will be to encourage, set goals, motivate and seek to improve skills and performance over time. It also helps to be a bit of a cheerleader and frequently praise your child's talents and abilities. By encouraging his or her efforts, you build self-esteem and confidence which may lay the groundwork for future success.



Be your child's cheerleader and frequently praise your child's talents and abilities!

# 10 Practical tips to help your child improve his or her organizational skills and focus at school and at home

- 1. Create a schedule.** Try to follow the same routine every day.
- 2. Put up a copy of the schedule to provide visual reinforcement.** Post the schedule in a prominent place so your child can see where he or she is expected to be during the day and when it's time for homework, play, and chores.
- 3. Try to keep tasks simple.** Try not to have too many things on the schedule for your child to remember. This way he or she has a better chance of completing each task—which can provide a sense of accomplishment.
- 4. Help your child get organized.** Work with your child to create a “home” for his or her backpack, toys, and clothing so these items will be less likely to get lost. Give your child a checklist that he or she can refer to before coming home from school, to help your child remember to bring home important papers and homework assignments.
- 5. Always try to use brief, clear directions.** For example, when reminding your child to pick up his or her clothes, consider saying, “please pick up your clothes” instead of “it would be nice if you picked up your clothes”.
- 6. Limit Distractions.** It may help to have the TV, radio and computer games off when your child is performing tasks that require concentration, especially homework.
- 7. Offer choices so your child feels involved in making decisions.** However, it's best to offer no more than two alternatives so that he or she isn't overwhelmed or over stimulated.
- 8. Goals and rewards can be effective.** You can use a chart to list goals and track positive behaviors, then reward your child's efforts. Goals should be SMART and rewards simple (e.g., an extra half hour of TV time).
- 9. Decisive, positive discipline usually works best.** Using time outs or removal of privileges can help, but try to tie the consequences to the inappropriate behavior (e.g., if your child doesn't wear a helmet while bike riding, they can't ride for the rest of the day).
- 10. Encourage your child's natural talents.** You know your child has unique skills. When others see those skills as you do, it may lead to greater success for your child. In addition, when your child is doing something he or she loves and is good at it, it can build confidence and self-esteem.

# 6 tips to work more closely with your child's teacher

Since teachers see your child all day at school, their input can help you understand your child's social behavior and academic abilities. These tips can help you work with your child's teachers to better help your child do the best he or she can every day.

- 1.** It's best to start with a face to face meeting. Let the teacher know that you value his or her input. Ask your child's teacher to be part of your child's support team.
- 2.** Ask the teachers about your child's behavior (e.g., paying attention, focusing, sitting still).
- 3.** Remember to listen carefully to what the teachers identify as your child's talents, abilities, strengths, and weaknesses.
- 4.** Agree on goals you both want to see for your child as well as a timetable for achieving these goals.
- 5.** Design a plan together to best support your child, including specific actions that you can both monitor.
- 6.** Talk about how you and the teachers would like to communicate going forward (email, phone-calls etc...)



Design a plan together to best support your child