

20 Things Parents Can Do About Motivation

from: http://education.calumet.purdue.edu/vockell/EdpsyBook/Edpsy5/Edpsy5_parents.htm

1. Encourage your child to look for intrinsic benefits that will arise from learning a certain subject matter. If necessary, go and find out what these benefits are, and then communicate them to your child.
2. Realize that your child is likely to look at life differently than you (no matter how wonderful your values are), and you can help motivate your child only to the extent that you can see life from his or her perspective.
3. Don't try to motivate your child by saying things like "This is easy!" or "Anyone can do this!" Say something like, "You can do it, if you work at it."
4. Help your child come to the belief that honest effort will almost always pay off. Honest effort means using time productively. Sometimes it is necessary to learn how to use time productively. That's part of effort.
5. Avoid saying, "You're not trying!" Instead, ask, "Is there anything you can do to help improve your performance?" Then help them find ways to spend additional time productively.
6. Help your child understand the goals of every unit of instruction, so that he or she can direct personal motivational energies toward attaining those goals.
7. Help your child see clear cause-and-effect relationships between his or her own actions and obtaining desired benefits.
8. Help your child set competitive goals wisely. Avoid having him or her rely on the failure of other children in order to feel successful. Encourage competition with his or her own past performance.
9. Encourage your child to set cooperative as well as competitive goals. Help your child realize that contributing to the success of a group is a worthwhile goal.
10. Recognize the successes of your child by finding ways to make his or her successful activities or products visible to yourself and to others in your family.
11. Minimize negative competition among the members of the family.
12. When your child is excessively excited or anxious about something in school, take steps to lower physiological arousal.
13. When your child is excessively bored, sleepy, or unconcerned about something in school, take steps to increase physiological arousal.
14. Help your child satisfy basic needs (e.g., hunger and safety), so that he or she can focus on higher needs.
15. Avoid calling attention to the intelligence or basic ability of your child. It is good that your child should believe that he or she is competent, but complacency is harmful. A child's conviction that he or she is incompetent is even more destructive.
16. Encourage your child to attribute his or her academic successes and failures to *effort*.
17. Focus as much as possible on *achieving success*, as opposed to avoiding failure.
18. Have realistic, positive expectations for your child.
19. Be aware of the possibility of negative stereotypes and avoid letting these influence your expectations or the goals you set for child.
20. Promote self-motivation by your child.