

## Strategies for Parents to Encourage Achievement Developing Self-Esteem, Motivation, and Responsibility

1. Find some positive characteristics about your child and emphasize these. Spending all of your time pointing out the things your child is doing wrong is easy. Try to mention the good things 10 times as often as the bad.

2. Don't use **put-downs** or sarcasm when correcting your child. Sarcastic remarks are very tempting, especially toward teenagers. Resist the temptation! Sarcasm can create wounds for a lifetime.

3. Avoid the role of **rescuer**. Let your child experience the consequences of forgetting a note, homework or lunch money. He or she will learn from this experience!

4. Discourage perfectionism. Emphasize what your child has learned, even if he or she made mistakes. If your child brings home a school paper or test with a low grade, look first at the items he or she got right. When looking at incorrect answers, ask what your child has now learned about the question.

5. Be aware of times your child is trying to manipulate you. Children who learn they can talk their way out of anything, or manipulate their parents into doing everything the way they want, learn how to be little dictators and how to be very sneaky.

6. Be aware of your child's areas of intense interest and build on them. Use success in these areas to build success in school. Encourage participation and learning in these interest areas even when your child is doing poorly in school. Don't take away the area of interest your child has as a punishment for not doing well in school. This is counterproductive!

7. Work with your child on setting goals. Short-term goals are important. Remember, even a month is a long time from a child's point of view!

8. Don't use threats but have reasonable and enforceable consequences for misbehavior. If you need to take away a privilege, make the punishment fit the crime and make sure you can enforce it.

9. Collect **success stories** of people who are self-motivated. Look for similar characteristics in your child and point these out.

10. Help your child create external motivators. Instead of giving rewards to your child for doing something right or accomplishing a goal, have the child think of a way to reward himself or herself after the task is completed. This teaches **deferred gratification**.

11. Don't overload your child with activities. Choose to omit some activities so the family has time at home together.

