

Goal Setting

When you coach teenagers to set goals effectively you need to make sure that they see the value, and it is set on their terms. Teens are more motivated and learn better if they feel they are in control of their environment and that their success is from their own abilities and effort, not from their parents' help. It's important to solicit and validate their input. Each person learns, thinks and displays learning differently so we need to give them the opportunity to learn according to their unique pattern of intelligence and learning style.

As parents it's important to help teens set parameters and provide guidance around the process of goal setting, but not determine the content of the goal. Involving them in discussion about their interests and strengths can start an initial decision about the goal they need to pursue, and what they need to accomplish it.

- Guide your teen to set a realistic and specific goal that can be measured in becoming more organized. He needs to think about what he will need and how difficult it will be to accomplish it on his own.
- Remind your teen that it takes time before his brain gets use to any changes he makes in his daily routine and he needs to say it and write it daily to train his brain and make it stick.
- Coach them on getting their material organized, what they will need, in what order they will need these things and who will do what?
- Encourage him to be flexible and when something goes wrong to ask what other ways can he consider to reach his goal, what else could he have done instead.
- Make it easy to approach you when he needs help
- Any change he makes should be because he wants it. Pleasing others doesn't work
- When the goal is reached discuss how he did it and how pleased is he with the outcome
- Discuss what worked and what did work and what did not. What does he thinks was the reason (encourage him to take responsibility instead of blaming others).
- Slip-ups are part of learning and opportunities to go back and do it even better.

With experience and a good role model your teen should be able to become increasingly more self reliant in reviewing and assessing his performance in setting his goals and accomplishing them with less stress and be able to move from your external coaching and guidance to more internal control and self fulfillment.