

Self-Discipline

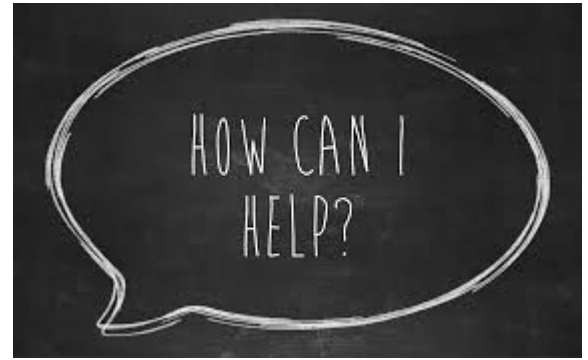
Abington Junior High School



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Goals



1. Please share what interests you about this topic.
2. What do you hope to learn tonight?

Self-Discipline Defined

- An individual's ability to control one's behavioral, emotional, and attentional impulses to achieve long-term goals.

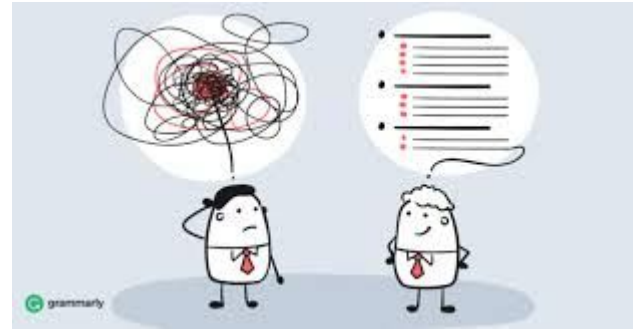


Why Self-Discipline Matters



- The need to delay gratification is the most pervasive demand that societies places on children.
- It is a strength that allows people to consider consequences and take deliberate, considered action.
- You want your child to make good choices when you're not in the room.

Self Discipline Can Help With:



- **Fewer School Absences:** Get to school on time every day.
- **Less Procrastination:** Initiate tasks on their own
- **More Time Studying:** Will help kids learn to stop an activity to shift to a (potentially) non-preferred activity.
- **Getting Organized:** Keep track of assignments and materials, complete all work for school.
- **Less Time Watching Screens / Television**
- **Regulating Emotions:** Become less upset / angry when completing tasks.
- **Thinking Through Actions:** Make well thought out decisions.

Self-Discipline & Executive Functions

- Learning “Self-Discipline” requires strengthening your child’s executive function skills.
- Executive function skills are responsible for cueing and directing the behaviors to get us through our day-to-day routines and engage in goal-oriented behavior.



Examples of Executive Functions

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- 1. Inhibition** - The ability to stop one's own behavior at the appropriate time, including stopping actions and thoughts.
- 2. Emotional Control** - The ability to modulate emotional responses by bringing rational thought to bear on feelings.
- 3. Initiation** - The ability to begin a task or activity and to independently generate ideas, responses, or problem-solving strategies.
- 4. Working memory** - The capacity to hold multiple pieces of information in mind for the purpose of completing a task.
- 5. Planning** - The ability to manage current and future- oriented task demands.
- 6. Organization** - The ability to impose order on work, play, and storage spaces.
- 7. Sustained Attention** - ability to avoid distractions and persist with task until completion
- 8. Self-Discipline**

Self Discipline Strategies

1. Awareness
2. Monitoring
3. Structured Environment
and Time
4. Positive Reinforcement
5. Identify Intrinsic
Motivational Factors

Increasing Awareness



- Provide students with concrete examples of their behavior and how it affects themselves and others.
- Engage in direct discussions with student to increase awareness of his/her executive functioning strengths and weaknesses.
- Give explanations for your rules. This teaches your child why they should be doing specific things.

Model Appropriate Use of Self-Discipline



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- ❖ Kids learn best from watching adults.
 - ❖ Can you identify self-discipline strategies used in your life?



Verbal Mediation - Problem Solving

- ❖ Model the use of verbal mediation strategies by talking through a problem out loud.
- ❖ Describe your thought process and strategies implemented.
- ❖ Describe obstacles and how to overcome them.
- ❖ Ask your child for their opinion when working through an issue.



Monitoring: Teaching Skills Routines



- Create a daily agenda to complete academic assignments, chores, extracurricular activities, and self-care activities
- Break down academic assignments or chores into manageable components—have student predict amount of time to complete each component
- Provide visual aids for students to complete the manageable components (i.e., checklists with step-by-step instructions)
- Practice planning for upcoming events / assignments.

Teach the Use of Internal Feedback

Positive “self-talk” strategies help students cope and persevere through stressful situations.

Parents may need to monitor self-talk statements and encourage students to generate positive self-talk

Negative self-talk: “I can’t do it”
“It’ll take forever!”

Positive self talk: “I can do the easy problems first,” “If I get stuck, I can get help,” “It’s okay to make a mistake”



Reinforcement: Establish Self-Administered Rewards

Have student identify self-discipline goals

Identify reinforcement for student to administer when goals are met, i.e. a brain break, stretching, snack, exercise



Implement Appropriate Consequences

- Natural consequences, though tough, can be great lessons (example: don't do your homework = poor grades)
- Logical consequences work better for others (example: A child who has a hard time getting up in the morning may need an earlier bedtime)
- Avoid power struggles
- Explain negative consequences and allow your child to choose



Structure the Environment

Carefully structure the environment to reduce the demands for frequent use of self-discipline.

Establish routines to help child modulate intensity of functioning in all arenas; after-school activities, homework time, bath time, preparation for next day, preparing for sleep.



Structure Time

Provide aids for time management; such as, consistent schedules and use of clocks and timers to self-monitor.

Have student monitor their use of time to identify areas of weakness or patterns in behavior.



Identify Potential Student Motivators



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Students may comply with external demands if the student also can recognize how the demands will help meet their own goals

Identify long-term goals, expose students to various career paths, colleges, and areas of interest



Self-Discipline Skills

- 1. Awareness**
- 2. Monitoring**
- 3. Structured environment and time**
- 4. Positive Reinforcement**
- 5. Identify Intrinsic Motivational Factors**

Scenario: Eddie



Eddie is an extremely social seventh grade student who is intelligent and always received good grades in elementary school. He used to love hands-on projects. Now in junior high, Eddie constantly procrastinates when assigned projects. He is socializing more in class and never seems to know the assignment directions. The projects are too complicated to do the night before. Consequently, his grades are lower than they have ever been. Eddie no longer seems to enjoy hands-on projects.

How can we help Eddie?

First of all, define the problem.

What self-discipline skills is Eddie having difficulty with that are required at the junior high school?



How can we help Eddie?

Awareness:

- Help Eddie recognize when he is and is not using his organization and planning skills
- Talk about how you organize and plan activities in your life
- Collaborate with Eddie's teachers and tutor to have everyone aware of his challenges with organization and planning

How can we help Eddie?

Monitor:

- Create a checklist with Eddie to break assignments down into manageable components
- Teach Eddie positive “self-talk” strategies to use when he starts to feel overwhelmed with long-term assignments

Reinforce

- Define goals with Eddie and reward him when goals are met
- Provide consequences when goals are not reached

How can we help Eddie?

Structure

- Create an environment free of distractions for Eddie to complete his project
- Set a timer and require Eddie to stay focused on assignment for 10 minutes at a time

Motivation

- Identify Eddie's long-term goals
- How will his current grades help him reach his goals?

Thank you for having us!

Questions?

