



Teaching Persistence

Step 1. Have Conversations with Your Child about What it Means to be Persistent

1. When you observe your child struggling with or giving up on a school project, say: "It's tempting to give up when things are hard and you don't feel like doing them anymore. When you give up on something, you are bound to fail. Remember, persistence helps us as these times to keep going and not give up."
2. When you hear your child saying "This is boring. I hate this", say: "We all have different things to do that are boring. I have learned that for me to be successful, it is important for me to keep going and to get it done rather than to put it off. This quality is called persistence."
3. Illustrate with your child doing something where persistence pays off. For example, in practising to ride a bike or when you spend a lot of time locating something you need from a shop or on the internet, say: "You see, the more effort and persistence we put into things, the more successful we are."

Step 2. Describe Examples of Persistent Behaviours to Practice

Select two or three examples of persistent behavior that you want your child to practice to help him/her to become more persistent:

Say: "It would be really good this week for you to keep trying to (select from the following list of behaviours your child finds frustrating and boring but necessary to do): finish your schoolwork before playing or socializing, check or proofread your work when you're finished to make sure it's correct, stay focused and not be distracted by others or the computer when you have work to do, spend more time studying a subject that requires practice, continue on even when your homework is hard, boring or annoying."

Step 3. Discuss Ways to Think that will Help Your Child to Be Persistent

1. When you see that your child has persisted at something he/she found frustrating and was successful as a result, say: "You see, hard work and effort in doing something you do not feel like doing leads to greater success" or "See, the more effort you put in the better your results will be". (Giving Effort Thinking)
2. In discussing with your child his/her approach to subject he/she finds difficult and/or boring, say: "You know, it's easy to think that things you do at school should always be fun and exciting and when they are not you shouldn't have to do them. At times when you have frustrating work to do, rather than thinking 'I can't be bothered,' a more helpful way of thinking that helps you get through the work quickly and get it over is "To be successful, I sometimes have to do things I don't feel like doing. No pain no gain!" (Working Tough Thinking)
3. When you notice that your child has a mountain of work to do and seems like giving up, say: "I know it seems like you'll never get through it all. A helpful way to think at these times is: "If I stick at this and don't give up, I'll get it done." (I Can Do It! Thinking)

Step 4. Things to Say to Acknowledge Your Child's Persistence

When you catch your child being persistent, say: "You didn't give up!" "You kept trying, great effort." "Making that extra effort helps you do better." "You sure didn't give up easily." "Your effort is very important. It helps you succeed." "See. Persistence pays off." "I can see you understand that to be successful, you sometimes have to do things you don't feel like doing." "The more you practice, the better you become."