

2021

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Counselor's Corner

January/February 2021

A Positive Mindset for the New Year!

Throughout this year as we navigate COVID-19, we have all experienced change in some capacity and have learned to adapt to new circumstances. As a result of this, moments of uncertainty, lack of normalcy, and a variety of emotions may have presented themselves during this time. We have the ability to learn from these experiences, overcome any challenges, and use all that we have encountered to create possibilities for the year to come.

As we enter 2021, it is important to take the time to reflect and think about how we can begin the new year with a positive mindset. The beginning of a new year provides an opportunity for a fresh start, and this year it may be more important than ever to set attainable resolutions. Here are some suggested tips for children and families to prepare for a successful and rewarding new year.

Work together as a family. Make a plan to come together as a family to brainstorm individual and/or family resolutions. Discuss, write or draw accomplishments from this past year, and consider what areas you can improve upon for the year to come. Share the ideas with one another and create a list that can be displayed for all family members as a positive reminder. Display the list that you've compiled on a piece of paper, whiteboard, chalkboard, mirror, or make a family new year's resolution jar.

Throughout the year, plan times to review the goals and acknowledge any obstacles encountered. The ongoing experience can help children feel proud of themselves, learn problem solving skills and develop a growth mindset.

Set quarterly goals. Sometimes when we think of new year's resolutions, we automatically focus on one "big" goal for the year. Instead, try setting multiple short-term goals to help stay motivated. One strategy is to create a goal for each season (winter, spring, summer, and fall). Set one goal to be achieved by the end of each season or identify steps to achieve a "big" goal by the end of the year. Remember to celebrate the successes along the way!

Encourage different types of goals. To help children brainstorm manageable goals, have them connect their goals with a specific topic such as: school or home, helping others, trying something new, healthy habits, daily routines, and learning from mistakes. The American Academy of Pediatrics suggests that different types of resolutions may be more developmentally appropriate for specific ages groups to help children understand the value and process of goal setting.

Create a vision board. A vision board is a fun and creative goal setting tool. It is a way to use images, pictures, and words, similar to a collage, to outline goals. Decide if the vision board should reflect one goal and the steps to achieve that goal, or multiple short-term goals. Then, gather a piece of paper or poster board, images from magazines or the internet, art supplies such as glue, tape, markers, and crayons to craft a vision board that will be inspiring and encouraging!

**Adapted from John Hopkins All Children's Hospital (hopkinsallchildrens.org), Children's Minnesota Pediatrics (childrensmn.org) and PBS Kids (pbs.org)*

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