



Grit

Rising up to meet **challenges** and **persevering** in spite of failure.

Grit means having passion for something so much that we are able to keep going even when it gets hard. It's more than "never giving up" because it's also about finding things in our lives that we can be truly passionate about.

5 ways to promote Grit

1

SUPPORT YOUR CHILD WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH

We often want to come to the rescue, but by providing encouragement and support instead, we teach our children that they have it in them to complete even the most difficult challenges.

3

FOCUS ON THE PROCESS & NOT THE OUTCOME

Instead of praising their high score, talk about the effort required to accomplish it.

2

SHARE YOUR GRIT STORY

Talk to your children about how the hard work you've encountered in your own life helped make you the person you are today. Let them know how good it feels to overcome challenges.

4

LEVERAGE THE POWER OF "YET"

Help your child see the value of the small steps along the way to success.

5

MODEL GRIT

Let them see you struggle and overcome obstacles. Discuss with them the difference between "a time for grit and a time to quit."

RESOURCES: <https://www.edutopia.org/article/grit-resources>





Leadership

Making *responsible decisions* and *motivating others* to action.

Leadership builds confidence and helps students succeed in activities both in school and out. While many leadership skills come naturally, taking advantage of key moments can have a large impact on students' development as leaders.

3 ways to promote Leadership



ENGAGING THEM

Leadership is developed with others, so finding opportunities for students to work with others is key. Extracurricular activities can help accomplish this.



HELPING THEM SET GOALS

Setting goals, and more importantly seeing them through, is a key quality of successful leaders.



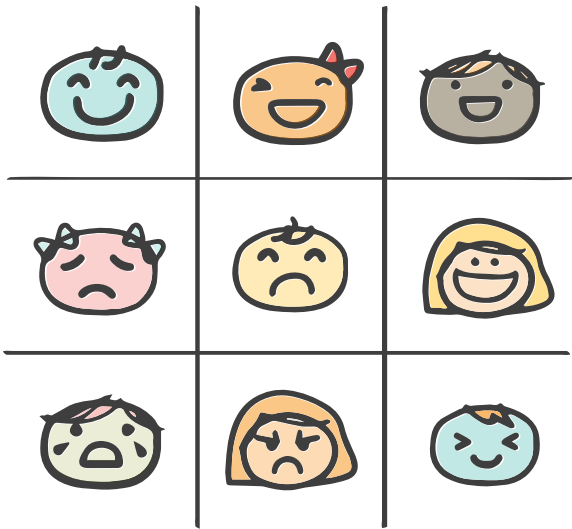
EMPOWERING THEM

Letting students make decisions helps them weigh pros and cons, and accept responsibility for their choices.

"One child, one teacher, one book, one pen can change the world." – Malala Yousafzai

RESOURCES: <https://www.learningliftoff.com/how-to-teach-kids-leadership-skills/>
<https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/241619>





Social Intelligence

Navigating *relationships* and *interactions* with respect and confidence.

While the world may place a huge emphasis on “book smarts” and IQ, our relationships with each other also have a large impact on our lives. Current research has also discovered that the ability to relate to others plays an important role in learning.

3 ways to promote Social Intelligence



FOSTERING KINDNESS

Teach your child to care about the concerns of the world and to empathize with others. Practice generosity and giving.



TEACHING EFFECTIVE CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Help teach your child to resolve disagreements with their peers by encouraging them to express their feelings clearly and calmly. Teach them how to describe the problem, express their feelings, and make a request. For example, “When you don’t let me join the game, I feel sad because I want to play too. Please stop.”

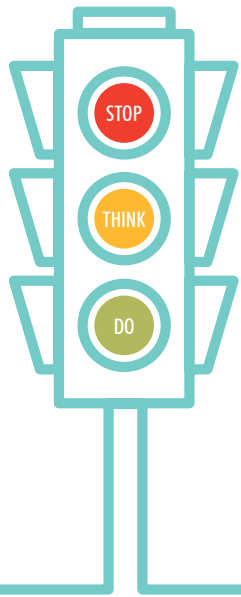


HELPING YOUR CHILD NAME AND DEFINE EMOTIONS

Kids feel long before they can name these feelings. Help your child identify these feelings and discuss them freely. With younger students, games like “Memory” (matching faces with names of emotions) is a fun way to learn.

RESOURCES: https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/topic_of_the_month_fostering_social_connections





Focus/ Self-Control

Focusing our minds and bodies by resisting distractions and actively *concentrating*.

Focus and self-control are related. One way to think about them is to think of focus as the ability to stay committed to goals in the long term and to think of self-control as the ability to stay calm, control impulses and resist acting in ways that feel out of control.

4 ways to promote **Focus/Self-Control**

1

REWARDING SELF-CONTROL

Studies like the famous “marshmallow test” have shown that students can exercise control over their impulses if the reward is high. If you tell a child that they’ll get to do something in 5 minutes, follow through.

2

GIVING REMINDERS

Letting your child know what’s expected just prior to an activity helps to turn on their focus/self-control.

3

PLAYING GAMES

Games like “Red Light, Green Light” and “Mother May I” are great at helping kids focus.


4

MODELING SELF-CONTROL

Children pick up on our reactions. How we respond has great influence on their own development.

RESOURCES: <http://www.parentingscience.com/teaching-self-control.html>





HOW WONDERFUL IT IS THAT
NOBODY NEED WAIT A SINGLE
MOMENT BEFORE STARTING TO
IMPROVE THE WORLD.

- ANNE FRANK

Optimism

Believing that *effort* today
improves tomorrow.

Optimism is closely linked to happiness, and who doesn't want their kids to be happy? The good news is that optimism is a skill that can be taught. Optimists view successes as permanent, pervasive, and personal and see challenges as temporary, specific, and impersonal.

3 ways to foster Optimism

1

REFRAMING CHALLENGES

Help your child explain their successes and challenges in this way: A successful grade can be explained as "I did well because I was prepared, I can succeed in other areas as well, and my hard work made this possible." Likewise, a setback can be explained as "That was harder than I thought it would be. With a little more studying, I'll do fine."

2

CREATING A SAFE SPACE

Creating a safe space for your child to take risks helps them view challenges as temporary obstacles. Learning from mistakes cultivates more optimism than never being allowed to make any.

3

PRACTICING GRATITUDE

Ask your child to name three things that they are grateful for at the end of the day. Make this a routine and your child will develop the optimistic habit of looking for things to be grateful for.

RESOURCES: http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/raising_happiness/post/the_benefits_of_optimism





Curiosity

Finding *wonder* and *passion* in the experience of learning.

Children are naturally curious, and there are plenty of reasons for us to want to support their curiosity, including a connection to academic achievement. Studies show that children who are curious ask more questions and learn better.

3 ways to promote **Curiosity**

1

FOSTER EXPLORATION

When children show curiosity, help them access ways to pursue it. An excellent resource is the book *50 Dangerous Things You Should Let Your Kids Do* by Gever Tulley.

2

ASK, "WHAT DO YOU THINK?"

When your child asks "why," engage them in a discussion about their own thoughts and ideas on the topic, and help them find out.

3

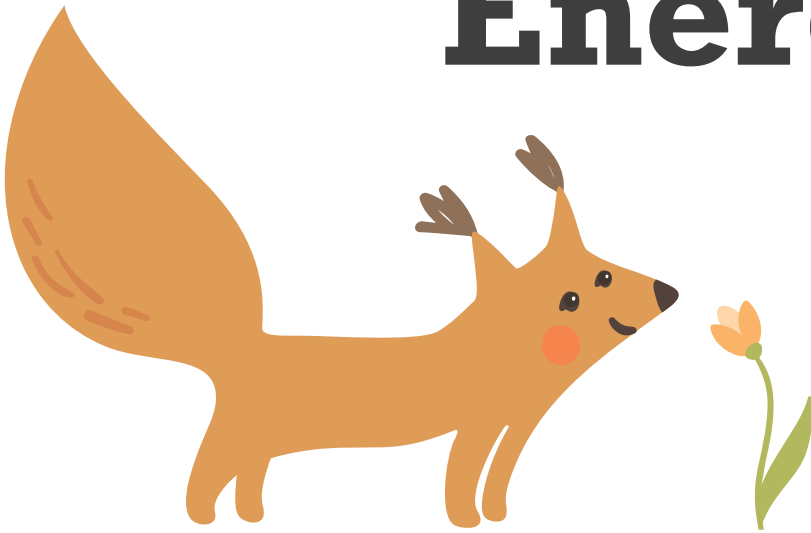
ASK AN EXPERT

Help your child understand that there are experts all around them that they can tap into. You'd be amazed at just how willing experts are to talk with kids, too. Experts love curious kids!

RESOURCES: <http://www.pbs.org/parents/expert-tips-advice/2016/03/lets-find-three-tips-raising-curious-kids/>



Energy/Zest



Engaging in life with *enthusiasm* and *excitement* each day.

We may think of energy and zest as loud, large displays of enthusiasm and excitement, but in reality even the quiet, introverted among us can display energy and zest. All kids possess enthusiasm for something, and it's our job to not let it get lost as they grow up.

3 ways to promote **Energy/Zest**

1

GETTING OUTSIDE

Studies show that spending time in nature restores our attention and energy, not to mention time outside produces physical benefits and positive social interactions as well.

2

SURPRISING THEM

Novelty and suspense are both energizing elements that build excitement and fight against boredom. Last month on St. Patrick's Day, my daughter came home to find Leprechaun "footprints" throughout the house and a bowl of magic rainbow seeds left behind for her. She couldn't stop talking about it!

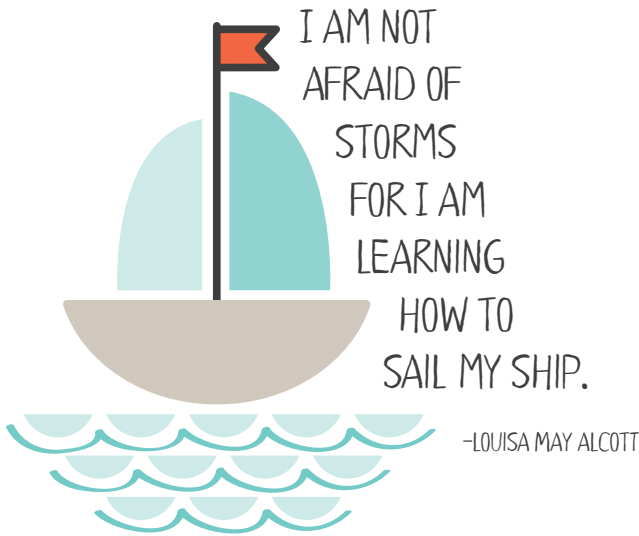
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SAVORING LIFE'S MOMENTS

Zest involves experiencing all of our senses, and taking a moment to slow down and really notice positive experiences helps children connect with the world around them. A fun example of this is known as "raisin meditation." Find out more by following the link below.

RESOURCES: http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/four_reasons_to_cultivate_zest_in_life
<https://characterlab.org/tools/zest>





Courage

Taking risks and *standing up* for what is right.

There are all sorts of ways to define courage, but all too often we tend to focus on “hero” courage: amazing feats in the face of overwhelming fear. At Athlos schools, we help students develop courage’s many other forms as well: “math courage”, “public-speaking courage”, and more.

3 ways to promote **Courage**



TRYING SOMETHING NEW

Courage is about doing things you’ve never done or are afraid to do but want to.



DOING DIFFICULT THINGS

Challenge your child to do something hard—but possible—and celebrate their risk-taking.



NURTURING A CONSCIENCE

Recognize your child when they stand up for someone else. They’re developing a sense of right and wrong, and learning about how their actions affect others.

RESOURCES: <https://www.parentmap.com/article/growing-character-teaching-children-about-courage>





Initiative



Taking **action** to help ourselves and others *without being asked*.

Initiative is closely linked to motivation, and intrinsically motivated students are able to sustain their learning for longer periods of time. Fostering initiative in children requires giving children choice and focusing on their strengths.

4 ways to promote Initiative

1

PROVIDE THEM WITH A CHOICE

Ask yourself if it would be OK if your child said “no” to a particular request. On those occasions when it would be, offer them a choice between options you can live with. Initiative is closely related to personal choice.

2

ENCOURAGE REFLECTION

Reflection helps students connect their actions to their values. Initiative is tied to acting in ways consistent with our beliefs about ourselves.

3

PROMOTE A GROWTH MINDSET

Students need to know that they’re up for the challenge. The more they come to see their success as a product of their effort—as opposed to natural ability—the more motivated they’ll be.

4

FOCUS ON DEPTH OVER BREADTH

Encourage your student to commit to an activity and stick to it, rather than starting and stopping several times. Support their follow-through with specific praise.

RESOURCES: <http://www.rootsofaction.com/initiative-children-adolescents/>
<https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/motivating-students/>





Humility

Allowing
accomplishments to
speak for themselves.

We all want our children to be self-confident. Having humility ensures that this self-confidence is authentic and well-deserved. Humility keeps us open to the contributions of others and grateful for the opportunity to learn something new.

4 ways to promote Humility

1

SHOWING GRATITUDE

Teaching your children to say thank you goes a long way. Gratitude and humility are closely linked.

2

TEACHING THROUGH EXAMPLES

Share stories of people throughout history who have shown great humility and discuss the importance of their actions.

3

SERVING OTHERS

Volunteering with a local organization makes the connection between actions and outcomes come to life.

4

ROLE PLAYING

Create scenarios that highlight the value of humility (like accepting compliments) and give your child opportunities to practice their response.

"Humility is not thinking less of yourself, it's thinking of yourself less."

RESOURCES: <http://www.livestrong.com/article/502504-how-to-teach-kids-to-be-humble/>
<http://www.allprodad.com/10-ways-to-teach-your-children-humility/>





Integrity

Striving to do
the *right thing*
all the time.

Children aren't born with integrity, but learn it through their social interactions with peers and the examples set by role models like teachers and family members. Empathy is key.

4 ways to promote Integrity

1

FOSTERING EMPATHY

By helping children understand how their actions affect others, they're more likely to make choices that match their sense of ethics.

2

DISCUSSING SCENARIOS

"What would you do if..." questions can help children think about the decisions they will be faced with making.

3

EXPECTING IT

Setting high standards for doing the right thing communicates a clear message about the importance of acting with integrity.

4

MODELING IT

When your children see you wrestling with difficult decisions and acting with integrity, they're more likely to do it themselves.

RESOURCES: <http://www.pbs.org/parents/experts/archive/2013/01/teaching-children-to-have-inte.html>





Creativity

Thinking

“*outside the box*”
and solving problems
with *innovation*.

Creativity is not something you either have or don't have. It's a skill like any other and important for living a healthy and happy life. Creativity is also not limited to artsy endeavors like music and painting, but is required for success in math, science, and a variety of other endeavors.

3 ways to promote Creativity

1

PROVIDING THE SPACE & TIME FOR CREATIVITY

Unstructured free play, a central fixture at Athlos schools, applies at home too. Allow kids to play creatively without a lot of adult interference.

2

ENCOURAGING EXPERIMENTATION

Now that you've created a space to create, it's important to develop an atmosphere for creativity. Encourage your child to try out lots of ideas without judging them. Let them make mistakes and share your own.

3

FOCUS ON THE PROCESS, NOT THE OUTCOME

If this sounds familiar, it's because creativity benefits from a growth mindset like many of our other Performance Character traits. Accomplish this by asking questions like “Did you have a good time?” or “What's next?”

“Imagination is more important than knowledge.” – Albert Einstein

RESOURCES: http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/raising_happiness/post/7_ways_to_foster_creativity_in_your_kids

