

Sun, Fun & Setting Goals:

A Guide for Parents (and their kids) to Rock Summer!

Interactive Videos Included



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Why Summer is So Much More Than "Just" Freedom for Your Child

You picked up this guidebook because you already realize the importance of your children taking ownership of their dreams and goals. This guidebook is created for you and your child to co-create and visualize their greatest goals for this summer.

Through this guidebook, you will learn how to help your child take control of their future by:

- Reflecting on their past year/semester
- Brainstorming ideas of what they want to learn, achieve or accomplish this summer
- Prioritizing a few goals that truly resonates with them
- Making a plan of action for each goal
- Tracking their progress and celebrating successes

This guidebook is designed to help your child set goals, make plans, and take action to achieve them. By co-creating and visualizing their goals, your child will gain a sense of purpose and direction, develop self-confidence and accountability, and learn the value of hard work and persistence.

You can help your child reach their greatest potential this summer and beyond.



Did you know ...



- A study published in the *Journal of School Psychology* found that goal setting was positively associated with academic achievement among elementary school students.
- According to the American Psychological Association, children who learn how to set goals at a young age are **more likely to be successful in their academic and social lives.** ←
- A survey conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics found that students who reported regular goal setting were more likely to report a higher sense of belonging in school and a greater sense of autonomy in their lives.
- A study published in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* found that setting and **achieving goals can contribute to a child's sense of well-being and positive self-esteem.** →
- In a survey of elementary school teachers, conducted by the National Association of Elementary School Principals, 94% of teachers reported that goal setting was an important part of their students' academic and personal development.



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In case you are craving more reasons about the importance of goal setting...



Goal setting with your child (especially outside of school), can increase their skill sets in areas such as:

- **Motivation:** Goals provide a sense of purpose and motivation for your kids. By setting goals, children have something to work towards and can experience a sense of accomplishment when they achieve their goals.
- **Ownership:** Setting goals empowers your kids to take ownership of their own growth and development. It encourages them to be proactive in their own lives and helps to build confidence and self-esteem.
- **Time management:** Goal setting teaches your kids the importance of managing their time effectively and breaking down larger goals into achievable smaller ones.
- **Decision-making skills:** Setting goals requires your kids to make decisions about what is most important to them, and encourages them to think critically about what they want to achieve and how they will achieve it.
- **Accountability:** When your kids set goals, they become accountable for their own progress and learning. This can help them take responsibility for their actions and develop a sense of personal responsibility.

Step 1: Start with Reflection



First, take a BIG, deep breathe. This isn't going to hard. This doesn't have to be filled with hairy decisions. This is meant to fill-UP your child with moments of reflection, self-discovery, and a deeper sense of well-being. There are lots of ways to go about this; however, here are some starting points if you need some ideas:

- **Role play conversations:** For children who struggle with social interactions, take turns role-playing different social scenarios that they may have faced during the school year. Talk through different solutions and approaches to help them feel more confident in similar situations in the future.
- **Create a memory box:** Encourage your child to gather items that represent important moments from the school year, such as art projects, awards, schoolwork, or special notes from teachers or friends. Have them decorate a box and store these items to reflect back on their experiences in the future.
- **Use music or movement:** Children who find it difficult to communicate verbally can benefit from expressing themselves through music or movement. Encourage them to create a dance or movement routine that represents their emotions from the school year, or to create a playlist of songs that they associate with different memories or feelings.
- **Interview peers and teachers:** For children who enjoy learning through social interactions, encourage them to interview their peers, teachers, or other trusted adults about their school year. They may gain new insights or perspectives about their own experience.
- **Create a vision board:** Use magazines, printouts, or drawings to create a vision board that represents your child's aspirations and goals for their future. This is a great way for older or more advanced children to reflect on what they've learned and what they want to achieve in the future.

Step 1: Start with Reflection, continued ...



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- **Use a visual schedule:** For children with autism or other communication difficulties, visual schedules can be a helpful tool for reflecting on the school year. Create a visual timeline of the school year and ask the child to point out their favorite activities or challenges they faced. It is okay if you help to create the timeline and then ask your child to identify the reflection points.
- **Write it down:** For children who are able to write, encourage them to journal or write a letter to themselves reflecting on their strengths and challenges from the past year.
- **Verbal reflection:** For children who are comfortable with verbal communication, sit down and have a conversation with them about their school year. Ask questions like "What did you enjoy most about the school year?" and "What was something that was challenging for you? How did you overcome it?".



Write down 2-3 ways you will reflect with your child.
Note: this is an important step for YOU, mom and dad, because when you write down your ideas, it helps with clarity, accountability, memory, creativity, and communication, making it an important practice for achieving your own goals.



Step 2: Brainstorming & Prioritizing Goals



Next, encourage your child to brainstorm ideas for summer goals. These may include developing a new skill (such as learning a new language or improving their personal hygiene habits), reading more books, becoming more physically active, or learning about new cultures.

Help them prioritize and focus on a few goals that they are particularly interested in accomplishing with a realistic time frame. Need some ideas to get this going? Here you go:

- **Set specific goals:** When setting goals, encourage your child to set specific and achievable goals. This will help them focus and prioritize their efforts.
- **Create a to-do list:** Encourage your child to create a to-do list each day, or each week, to help them prioritize tasks and stay organized.
- **Use a reward system:** Create a reward system that incentivizes your child to complete high-priority tasks. This can help them stay motivated and focused on important goals.
- **Rank tasks by importance:** Help your child rank their tasks by importance. This way, they can focus on completing the most important tasks first.
- **Encourage breaks:** Taking breaks can help children recharge and stay motivated. Consider encouraging your child to take a short break after completing a high-priority task.
- **Help them focus on one task at a time:** Encourage your child to focus on one task at a time. This can help them avoid feeling overwhelmed and can increase their productivity.

Step 3: Planning and Action

Encourage your child to create a plan of action for each specific goal. Ask them about what resources they will need to reach their goals, what steps they will need to take, and what barriers they may face.

To help support your child, offer help, connections to resources and networks that may help them achieve their goals



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Take time now to share with your child the templates provided in the next few pages. Or, get out a sheet of paper and markers, find a some chalk and spare wall, or another creative way to connect with your child regarding the desired resources they will need to reach their goals.



Overall, helping your child create micro-steps in goals involves encouraging small steps, being specific, providing support, celebrating successes, revisiting and adjusting goals, and promoting autonomy. By using these strategies, you can help their children achieve their goals and develop important skills like perseverance, self-discipline, and self-reflection. For instance, when I set a goal for myself to floss my teeth, I started with flossing only one (1) tooth a night. This gradually increased each night - and I eventually just gave in because it felt silly to only floss one tooth. Small, micro steps are key.

MY GOALS

WEEK OF _____

Bake a new recipe that is healthy and yummy	m	t	w	t	f	s	s
read a kids baking blog							
make a list of ingredients							
find baking tools in my kitchen that I can use (ask a parent for help)							
find a time with my parents to bake							

Ride my bike with confidence	m	t	w	t	f	s	s
ride my bike to the block and back							
ride my bike to the park and back							
watch a UTube video about how to use bike gears							

Teach my Dog a New Trick	m	t	w	t	f	s	s
check out a book at the library about dog training							
find out if my dog likes treats or toys for a reward							
identify a new task to teach my dog							
work 1:1 for 5 minutes a day							

MY GOALS

WEEK OF _____

	m	t	w	t	f	s	s

	m	t	w	t	f	s	s

	m	t	w	t	f	s	s



SMART GOALS

When setting goals, make sure it follows the SMART structure. Use the questions below to create your goals. You can also use this same process (or thought process) to help your child create their own goals.

S	<u>SPECIFIC</u> WHAT DO I WANT TO ACCOMPLISH?	
M	<u>MEASURABLE</u> How will I know when it is accomplished?	
A	<u>ACHIEVABLE</u> How can the goal be accomplished?	
R	<u>RELEVANT</u> Does this seem worthwhile?	
T	<u>TIME BOUND</u> When can I accomplish this goal?	

Step 4: Track Progress & Celebrate Successes



Have your child create a progress tracker using a simple chart or journal. Set check-ins weekly, biweekly, or monthly to look at their progress, discuss overcoming obstacles, and celebrate their accomplishments.



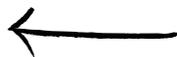
Set reminders in your phone or put them into your calendar. When you create accountability for yourself then it is so much easier to create accountability for your child, too.

Step 5: Adjust Goals

If your child realizes they set an unrealistic goal, don't discourage them. Work together to adjust and find a more achievable or meaningful goal based on their abilities and interests. Remember, it is okay to change things up when you realize something isn't working.



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Final Step: Connect with a Parenting Coach



If you would like additional support in bringing your child's summer goals to life, I can help! I am experienced in helping parents with effective strategies for goal-setting and can provide guidance and support to keep you and your child accountable and motivated throughout the process. Feel free to contact me for support with your summer routines and goals, 1:1 coaching, and access to my parenting workshops.

I'm here for you.

Learn
Love
+ Grow!

Amanda Irtz



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About Amanda Irtz

Somewhere around 2017, I gave my all to the students at the middle school where I served as an assistant principal. My job filled me with joy in many ways: seeing students learn and laugh, staying young at heart, and feeling a sense of accomplishment from culture change coming to life. In addition, it also filled me with a deep sense of responsibility to support my students in any way possible, even though it was often more than one assistant principal could offer. However creative my solutions were, gaps remained and I felt exhausted from running up and down the school halls giving so much of myself to those who weren't related by birthright. At the end of each day, my emotional "heart bucket" was empty - leaving nothing for my own children.

This was not an option any longer after my marriage shattered and divorce became inevitable. Distraught by my failure in the most important relationship in my adult life, I decided to make a shift in my approach as both a parent and professional. It was time for me to become the best version of myself that I can be - something I had never learned growing up - so that one day I could provide all that my kids need without hesitation or frustration. I wanted to feel confident about the parenting decisions I make alone now.

My 22 years of educational experience suddenly came into focus; 20 thousand plus students had given me valuable insight into what works when connecting with kids - tools which could help build meaningful relationships between us all. Combining these insights with parental guidance led to amazing results; suddenly there were conversations taking place between us all - moments that felt special and went beyond simple family exchanges: my kids started coming to me wanting to talk! My personal relationships were also improving drastically, although on tough days when loneliness creeps in due to being a single parent, it was easy for self-doubt to set in. But then came reminders of why we keep showing up: because our belief in ourselves is stronger than ever before; because powerful parenting tools do exist; because we have something unique and invaluable to offer our children as parents - no matter how hard it gets sometimes!