

8 Steps to Help Your Child Set Personal Goals



1. Brainstorm Ideas

- Get together with your child and talk about different goals. Have your child think about their challenges, abilities, and interests. Consider goals for different areas like academics, extracurricular activities, or social skills.
- The ideas should come more from your child than from you. The more meaningful the goals, the more your child will want to work toward them.



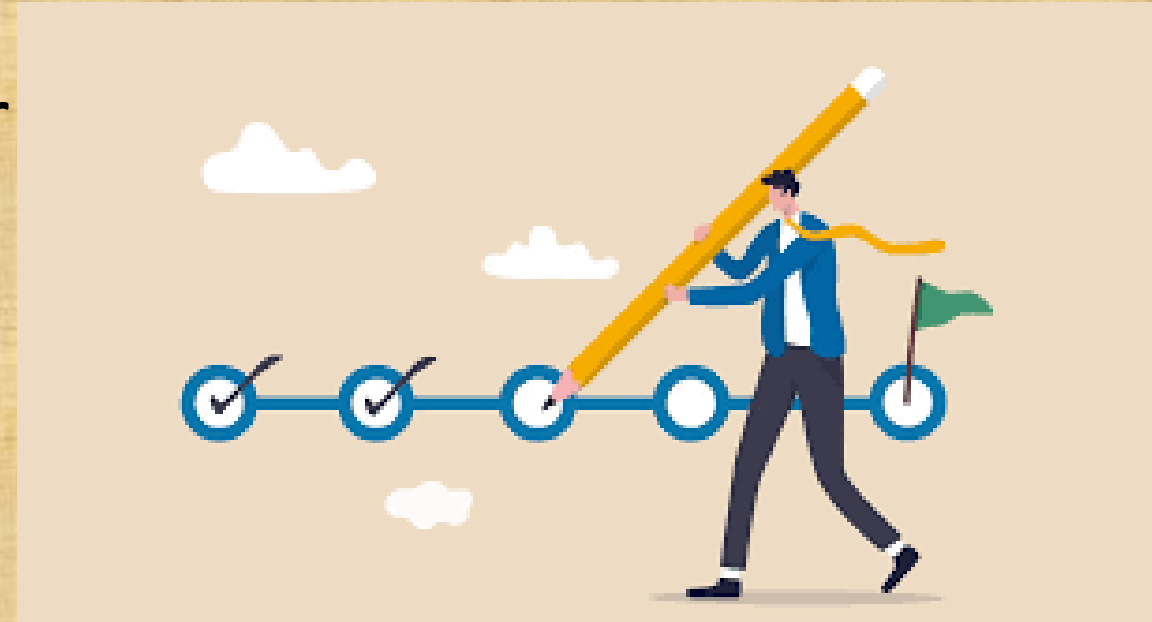
2. Write down what your child wants to achieve

- After your child decides on a goal, make it final and write it down. It's important to keep a record of what goals have been set. This will also come in handy for accountability in the future.



3. Limit the number of goals and be realistic

- Setting goals can be fun and exciting. It's a good experience for kids to challenge themselves. Each goal should be ambitious but realistic — something that will stretch your child's skills without being overwhelming.
- Be careful of taking on too many goals. Choose an amount that feels right for your child.



4. Make goals specific

- Making goals specific helps them be achievable and measurable. Think about your child's goal, the skill your child is working on, and how your child will achieve it. For example: "To become a better trumpet player by our May concert, I'll practice 30 minutes a day."



5. Break goals into small chunks

- Breaking down any task into smaller parts can help get it done. Talk with your child about possible ways to chunk their goals. That way there are breaks built into their goals. And the goals won't be so overwhelming.



6. Create a way to monitor progress

- By monitoring progress, you can hold your child accountable to their goal. There are many ways to do this. You might have your child keep track of their progress on a chart. Or you could have regular check-ins to talk together about how the goals are coming along.
- You can also ask questions or offer reminders about the goal. But try not to nag. Some kids might respond well to “I know you wanted to have someone over twice a month. Has that happened yet for February?” Others might do better with “We don’t have any plans this weekend, if you want to have a teammate over.”



7. Celebrate achievements toward the goal

- Celebrate the accomplishments as they come. Maybe your child completed one of the small chunks you both set out. Or maybe your child is working really hard, putting in time and effort. Celebrating progress will help your child stay motivated and build confidence.



8. Help your child stick with goals

- However good your child's intentions and plans are, sticking with them can be hard. There are ways to help.
- If your child agrees, consider working toward the same goal together. You'll make each other more accountable. You can also share your own experiences with goal-setting. Be honest about what did and didn't help you with your own goals.
- Even if your child doesn't reach a goal, setting it and working toward it can be a meaningful experience. Talk through how things went off-track and what strategies your child might try in the future.

