

## GRIT

## Help your child build GRIT.

Over the last few months teachers and students have been talking about how we can always ensure we give our best. Life can be challenging and sometimes we have to face moments which require us not to give up. We face challenges daily, from solving mathematical problems to having to write a creative story. To ensure we pick ourselves up and face these challenges head on we have to have Grit. Grit is defined as passion, perseverance, and stick-to-it-ness. Making a plan, taking action, and keeping a sense of confidence helps develop grit.

**PARENTS!** Here are 13 ways to help children build GRIT.

1

## GOALS AND PURPOSE

Discuss with your child their goals and purpose in life. Then talk about the steps that would be required in order for your child to reach their goal. Encourage them to create a dream board to help visualize the purpose and goals.



2

## FIND A PASSION

Help your child find a passion (or at least an engaging activity). Pursuing an interest of their own choosing can help them identify a passion and understand that practice, hard work, and perseverance are surest way to achievement.



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## "HARD THING RULE"

Follow the "Hard Thing Rule" by doing the following:

- Each member of the family has to do something hard
- You must finish what you start
- No one gets to pick the "hard thing" for anyone else, so your child gets to choose his own challenge

Talk about setbacks as they arise. Help your child build a plan B or C when necessary. Share your feelings about your challenge and celebrate when family members persevere through difficult tasks.



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## FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT

Below are some examples of movies that reinforce grit.

**Lion King** (1994 - Rated G) A young lion gets tricked into believing that he causes his own father's death. He learns to go back and face the truth and claim what was rightfully his all along – the Kingdom.

**The Secret of Nimh** (1982 - Rated G) This movie is the heartwarming story of Mrs. Brigsby, a mild-mannered mother mouse, who will move heaven and earth to save her family from the Farmer Fitzgibbon's plow. She faces many obstacles including a ferocious cat and a mysterious rat, and through her sheer grit, conquers them all.

**The Blind Side** (2009 - Rated PG-13) Since this is a biography, it opens the doors for real-life discussions, especially if you have older kids. A homeless and traumatized boy becomes an All American football player and first round NFL draft pick with the help of a caring woman and her family.

**The Pursuit of Happyness** (2006 - Rated PG-13) Based on a true story. This movie would appeal to older kids. It is the story of a single dad who becomes homeless and his struggle to make life normal again for his son. It gives an opportunity to discuss what it would really feel like to not have the comforts of everyday life and find oneself suddenly homeless.



**5****TEACH GRIT THROUGH LITERATURE**

Read classic stories about perseverance like *“The Little Engine That Could”* or Dr. Seuss’ *“Oh, The Places You’ll Go!”* Help your child find connections to their own life. Talk about the challenges, response to failures, and how to live with grit.

**6****TEACH GRITTISS**

One example of teaching grittiness could be if you signed up for a half-marathon. First, you could create a training schedule to show your kids how you broke the big hurdle into smaller, more accomplishable goals. Then, have your kids come to the race so they can see that, even with all of your hard work, finishing was not easy. Showing your children that even you struggle at new things, shows them first-hand that, while difficult, achieving goals can be rewarding.

**7****ALLOW FRUSTRATION**

Parents hate to see their kids struggle. But learning from challenges (as well as failure) is the key to making the connection for kids that true achievement does not come easily.

**8****OFFER PRAISE**

Teaching grit includes praising the effort behind those good performances. Do not forget to praise effort because, though every performance may not be perfect, consistent effort will lead to more good performances than bad. Instead of praising your child for his grades or for being “smart” praise him for being tenacious and determined.

**9****LET YOUR CHILD TRY TASKS ON THEIR OWN**

Constantly intervening in your child’s activities prevents them from learning for themselves. This can undermine their confidence and create a fear of failure. They may even end up relying on you or waiting for you to help with future struggles. Instead, demonstrate how to do a new task, such as cooking, and allow your child to try. This allows them to try new things, but without feeling that they are all alone. Plus, if they need your help, you are right there to jump in.

**10****SET YOUR CHILD UP FOR SUCCESS**

Choosing when to jump in and help when you see your child’s failure in advance is always a difficult decision. One of the best ways that you can teach your child grit is, whenever possible, ask them to do tasks that they are capable of and age-appropriate, but that will not come easily.

**11****TEACH SELF-ENCOURAGEMENT**

When you see your child struggling, offer encouragement that you are there to help, but you know that they can do it on their own. For example, if your child falls down when learning to ride a bike, praise his efforts at getting back up and trying again and again, rather than only praising when he learns to ride fast on his own.

**12****MODEL GRIT**

If you love what you do, let others know. Wear your passion on your sleeve. When you fail, openly share your frustration but go out of your way to point out what you learned from the experience. Emphasize playing the long game—life is a marathon, not a sprint.

**13****CELEBRATE GRIT**

When you see grit, draw attention to it: *“Your work this past quarter has demonstrated enormous dedication. I know it wasn’t always easy.”* Praise passion: *“You are so into this! That is just awesome!”*

