



Helping Hand

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Gradebook Word Power

We've all heard the saying, "It's not what you say, but how you say it." And most people probably agree. However, according to Debbie Silver, author of *Fall Down 7 Times, Get Up 8: Teaching Kids to Succeed*, it really is about what you say.

Attribution Theory is a psychological concept that attempts to explain why people are able, or not able, to achieve their goals. While studying peoples' responses on achievement, psychologist Bernard Weiner classified those responses into four categories:

- **Task:** "That article was too hard to read," or "The homework was easy."
- **Luck:** "I guessed correctly," or "The teacher only asked things I didn't study."
- **Innate ability or talent:** "Musical ability runs in my family," or "I'm not athletic – never have been, never will be."
- **Effort:** "I didn't try very hard," or "I did all my assignments and studied a lot."

Look at the list again. Did you notice that the first three categories are outside a person's control? Your students can only control the last one. Consider these findings the next time you're talking to a student. Are you praising their luck, innate ability or their effort?

Help empower students by providing feedback that attributes their success (or lack thereof) on what they have control over – their choices and their effort. Here's an example of effective feedback: "Your score clearly shows you've mastered this topic. Be proud of yourself!"

Empower students
by providing feedback on their
personal effort.





Healthways

Benefits of Pets

Whether it's a goldfish, hamster, cat or dog, pets offer companionship and become a loved member of the family. But having a pet, whether in the classroom or at home, has many other benefits for a child.

Exercise. Pets such as dogs get you outside and moving around. When kids take a dog on a walk or throw a ball in the yard, they are practicing their hand-eye coordination while being active.

Social facilitation. Pets accept people for who they are and can give children practice in social relationships. Their unconditional love can increase a child's self-esteem. Pets give kids something to talk about and a shared interest with other kids. They also can help build a family bond when time is spent together doing pet-related activities.

Comfort. Cuddling with a pet has been found to reduce stress, anxiety and loneliness. Pets can provide comfort to a child.

Children often seek out their pet when they're feeling upset, scared or lonely.

Responsibility. Caring for a pet helps kids develop a sense of responsibility. Whether their job is to feed the pet or clean the cage, kids learn what it means to take care of another living being and how their actions can have consequences for others. Pets also teach kids the values of being gentle, kind and respectful to others.

Good for health. Although some people are allergic to animals, there is research to show that children who are exposed to cats or dogs as babies are less likely to develop common allergies; and early exposure to pets may decrease a child's risk for developing asthma, and may even increase immunity to sickness.

Career Quest

Goal Setting

No matter what career path a student sets out on, it's important they learn how to set goals and work hard to accomplish them. The following tips will make it easier for a child to set and reach their goals.

1. Set goals that are both specific and realistic. If your student wants to be an astronaut, for example, start with smaller and more attainable goals that will help them reach their bigger goals. Maybe that means getting good grades in math class or learning how model rockets work.
2. Help your student understand that goals can take time to accomplish. We live in an age of instant gratification, but the best kinds of goals take time and effort; they aren't accomplished overnight. Find ways to track progress and help them see how far they've come since they started.
3. Slip-ups and obstacles don't mean they failed. Your student may be tempted to give up when things don't work out or happen right away. Let them know slip-ups are part of the learning process – they're normal and happen to everyone. Reaching their goal may take a few tries, but don't let them give up.
4. Help your student stay on track with their goal. They may not want you constantly reminding them what they need to do, so try other techniques such as having visual cues like encouraging "reminders" in their environments. Be sure to celebrate their successes! This keeps them focused and motivated toward reaching their goals.

*The most
rewarding
goals
will take
time & effort.*



School Safety

Keeping Schools Safe with Technology

School safety has always been a top priority, but the recent gun violence in schools is greatly increasing the public's attention on the subject. Schools have begun to implement security measures utilizing available technology to keep students safe, daily and in emergencies.

One school district has a multi-platform integrated system on their campus that allows them to control over 300 doors at the high school, middle school and junior high. In a lockdown situation, instead of faculty having to go to a door and lock it, all outside doors can be locked with the click of a mouse. Administrators can receive a text if a door is opened and have real-time

access to video surveillance cameras from any Wi-Fi enabled device.

Other schools are improving the process of recording who enters the building on a daily basis. Rather than using paper and pencil sign-in sheets, some schools have moved to computer-based programs, similar to a kiosk. Visitors are able to check themselves in and the system is able to record additional information quickly and effectively. The types of information can include a photo of the visitor, the reason for their visit, the location they're visiting, and a time stamp; even a background check or driver's license scan can be run. Some systems allow school administrators to deny entrance

based on parental custody issues or sex offender information. These new technologies and systems help make school a safe environment for everyone.

**300 doors
locked
with just a click.**



Drug Free Zone

Substance Abuse

When it comes to keeping kids away from drugs and alcohol, the best place to start is providing them with the facts before they find themselves in a risky situation. If kids aren't comfortable talking to their parent or another adult, they'll look for answers elsewhere, even if the source isn't reliable.

Start a conversation with your child. Ask questions in a nonjudgmental, open-ended way. Show that you're willing to discuss the

topic and hear what they have to say, even if they're not quite ready to talk. By beginning the dialogue and discussion now, your child may be more willing to come to you for help in the future.

Here are some other tips:

- Know your child's friends and their parents. You can get to know them by taking them to and from after-school activities, games, movies, etc. Take the

opportunity to introduce yourself to other parents and exchange contact information.

- Encourage after-school activities such as youth groups, sports, art classes, music lessons, community service or academic clubs. Kids that are involved in positive groups are less likely to use drugs.
- Make it easy for your child to leave a place where drugs are being used. Let them know they can always call you, at any time, for a ride home.
- Set and enforce curfews. Arrange times to check-in by phone when they're out.
- Help children learn how to identify and develop healthy, positive friendships and identify and reject unhealthy ones. Children develop their own identity and sense of belonging through personal relationships. By helping them form positive relationships, they're more likely to avoid negative influences.





Doing Good

Putting Fun into Fundraiser

Planning to create a lip dub video of artist Katy Perry's song "Roar," students at Lakewood High School in Lakewood, Colo., thought this would just be a fun thing to do together. However, when the singer announced a contest in which she'd personally come to the school of the winning video and perform a concert, the stakes were increased and they went all out creating their video.

Then the eight days of flooding hit parts of Colorado in September 2013. Lakewood students thought, 'If we win, we can have her play at a bigger venue, raise money for the flood victims, and bring some spirit back to our state.' But the wait to find out the winner didn't slow the school down! Before their homecoming football game against Boulder area's Fairview High, a prayer and a moment of silence to honor flood victims was observed. During halftime, cheerleaders went into the stands and raised money to donate to flood relief efforts.

After a long, grueling wait, the winner of the contest was announced... Lakewood High! Unfortunately, contest rules won't allow the school to sell the concert tickets as a fundraiser. But once again, the student body is being proactive. They're challenging every high school in the country to raise \$1,000 for a charity of their choice. Just think how much money this could raise nationwide.

By helping those in need, especially the people of their state as they recover from a tragic natural disaster, this student body sets a great example – thinking about the greater good.

Students
setting an example
for all.



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