



Lesson 4: Ready. Set. Goal.

Topic: Setting Goals

About This Topic:

Setting goals can help your child learn how to make choices and develop positive decision-making habits. Even the littlest learners can begin identifying small short-term goals for themselves during everyday moments.

From the classroom:

What is a goal? A goal is something we work toward completing or accomplishing. It can be saving money to buy something special or learning how to do something new.

Why are goals important? Setting goals helps us focus on the things we want to work toward.

How can I set goals for myself? Think about what we might want to do or learn, and then think about how long it might take to accomplish. We don't want to be frustrated, so make sure the goal is achievable and realistic.

Words To Know:

Goal: Something you wish to achieve or accomplish in a certain amount of time.

Need: Something you must have to survive, such as clothes, shelter, or food.

Want: Something that you would like to have but that you could live without.

Resources:

Books:

- *Amelia Makes a Movie* by David Milgrim: Amelia is determined to make a movie, but it won't be easy. As she finds out, it sometimes takes a lot of hard work and compromise to reach a goal or achieve a dream.
- *The Little Engine That Could* by Watty Piper: One small train shows how believing in yourself can make all the difference as you reach for your goals.
- *Arthur's TV Trouble* by Marc Brown: Arthur sees a TV commercial for a doggy treat timer and sets his mind to having a dog of his own. He sets a goal to raise enough money to buy his very own furry friend.

Games and Online Resources:

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Conversation Starters ... Ask Your Child:

- What things have you accomplished this school year? (riding a bike, jumping rope, learning to read, and so on)
- What is something you would like to learn how to do?
- How could you practice or work toward that goal?
- What goals are you working toward in school?

Try This ... at Home:

Create a Goal Chart: Have your child identify something he or she wants — a toy, an outing, or a privilege. Determine the amount of currency (stickers/stamps/tokens) it would take to reach that goal, and also how to earn those tokens (good behavior, chores, and so on). As your child earns “currency” to meet that goal, track the progress on a goal chart.

at the Bank:

Open a Savings Account: Consider opening a savings account with your child. He or she can begin depositing money earned or received on birthdays or holidays. Many banks give children coin holders or coloring books. Discuss how you choose an account. Your child may not understand everything now, but it helps establish a foundation for later in life.

at the Store:

I Want It Later: Next time you are at a store with your child, help him or her set a goal for a wanted item. This is a great way to practice delayed gratification as well as to avoid shopping battles or emotional/impulse buying. Instead of buying a toy, have your child write it down or draw a picture of it. Young kids can circle images in the store circular as they walk around the store. Save this list for special occasions like birthdays or holidays, or use it for ideas when creating a goal chart.

If I Keep My Dollar ... : When a spending dilemma arises in the store, see how many ideas your child can come up with for the benefit of saving. For example: If I keep my dollar I could get bubblegum tomorrow. If I keep my dollar I could share my money with a friend and buy a treat at lunch. If I keep my dollar I could save enough to buy a new toy truck.