

Goal Setting

SMART is an acronym for letters stands for a focus in the goal setting process.

Specific (Ask yourself: **WHAT** are you going to do? Be clear and detailed.)

Measurable (Ask yourself **HOW** will you know when it is finished?)

Attainable (**HOW** are you going to do it? Make sure you are able to achieve the goal)

Realistic (Instead of: "I'm going to lose 10 pounds this week." A realistic goal is: "I'm going to lose a pound and a half each week")

Time-bound (**WHEN** are you going to have this done? Take small steps to complete your goal by the deadline you set. Is it short-term? Is it long-term?)

A short-term goal is something you want to do in the near future. The near future can mean today, this week, this month, or even this year. Something you want to accomplish soon.

Examples: Buy a bicycle, start tennis lessons, read a book every night.

Long-term goals are goals that take a long time to achieve. Examples: Graduate from college, save for a house, and have a career in Dentistry.

Tips for Setting Long-Term Goals

- Work backwards. Think about what you want to achieve then plan steps going back to what you *can do right now*.
- Create a picture of where you want to be in life 10 years from now.
- Think about what you need to do in five years, in one year, and in six months to get to your long-term goal.
- Write down what you need to do each month to achieve your goals. (Short-term)
- After each monthly goal is achieved, look at your goals and adjust them as needed.

Prioritize Your Goals

How do you decide what to do first? How do you adjust your goals? This is called prioritizing. Prioritizing means that you decide what is most important to you right now. All of your goals are important, but it's impossible to work on all of them at once. This helps avoid feeling overwhelmed and gives your attention to the more important ones.

1. Choose what is most important right now.
2. Focus mainly on that goal.
3. Add to or change goals as you become comfortable with your efforts and as your life changes. (Be flexible)

Short Term Goals come as a result of prioritizing and identifying current needs from the long-term goals. Keep your short-term goals small and achievable. Be specific. Include dates, times, and amounts so that achievement can be measured and it will be satisfying to achieve it.

Tips for Writing Effective Goals

Be Positive: "To improve my spelling" is a much better goal than "Don't spell with so many mistakes."

Set Goals You Have Control Over: Parents, teachers, & work, including deadlines, can take away some of the control you may think you have over your life. Pay attention to manage only that which is in your power to manage. Don't worry about the rest.

Adjust Goals as needed: If you consistently fail to meet a measurable goal, then you can adjust it or analyze the reason for failure and change the goal so you see success. Add to the goal slowly so it is not overwhelming and so that it is achievable.