

SMART Goals for Health and Wellness

Overview

Goal setting is a great way to help children build self-confidence and help them create healthy habits. Encourage children to dream big while practicing goal-setting through small, attainable stepping stones to reach a larger focus. Use the SMART goal template to simplify the goal-setting process for children and ask them to think of all of the different things they can achieve and ways they can grow as a healthy and kind human being!

Take Action

Brainstorm health and wellness goals with students - individually and goals that the class can achieve together. Next, break them down by using the SMART goal template!

- S- Specific. It is important to be specific with what you would like to achieve and how you think you can achieve it.
- M- Measurable. A measurable goal is a goal that has clear deadlines and expectations of what the final product will look like.
- A- Achievable. Your goal should be achievable, even if that means starting with a smaller goal that may help you to achieve your more ambitious goals later.
- R- Relevant. Make sure your goal is relevant to your larger aspirations.
- T- Timely. Setting smaller goals that are timely will allow you to plan out how you will achieve success on a timeline.

Here are a couple of examples of SMART goals around nutrition that can be achieved at school and at home.

- *In spirit of March being National Nutrition Month, try one new fruit or vegetable (or with your family) each week of March.*
 - *S- Specific -Who? You or you and your family. What? Trying new healthy foods. Where? At school or at home. Why? During national nutrition month, you want to explore new foods and eat healthier.*
 - *M- Measurable- 1 per week (That means 4 new vegetables and/or fruit by March 31).*
 - *A- Achievable- 1 new vegetable or fruit per week - this could be in the lunch line at school or as your grocery shopping with family for lunch or snacks.*
 - *R- Relevant- March is National Nutrition Month and is a perfect time to try new healthy foods.*
 - *T- Timely- The month of March will go by in a hurry allowing you a short manageable time frame to try something new!*

- *Teach one nutrition lesson during snack time per month for 3 consecutive months with each lesson focusing on a different nutrition component.*
 - *S-Specific. While children are enjoying their snack, talk to them about why there is a snack time (to give us fuel to learn and be active) and what constitutes a healthy snack (protein, vegetables, fruit, real food, etc.).*
 - *M-Measurable. One nutrition lesson a month per month for 3 months.*
 - *A-Attainable. Preparing a nutrition lesson for a 20-minute snack time can be done in 30 minutes. Visit Action for Healthy Kids [Healthy Eating Toolkit](#) for ideas at school and at home or speak with a health teacher at your school!*
 - *R-Relevant. Nutrition education can be a great way to foster healthy habits and help children make the mind-body connection to food and how it makes us feel.*
 - *T-Timely. Leveraging snack time is a great way to make use of time that is already carved out in the day while exploring something new.*

- **Have your students set weekly or monthly goals.** Create a “goal board” to display everyone’s goals somewhere visible in the classroom. At the end of the week, hold a “reflecting on our goals” session where students reflect on how

they worked towards achieving their goal throughout the week and why they may or may not have reached it and outline the steps needed to try again.

- **Set goals as a class!** Make sure you write them somewhere visible as a constant reminder of your class goal. Talk about how goal setting can help us be more productive and achieve our hopes and dreams.

Looking for more ideas to jumpstart your health and wellness goal setting?

- [Try hosting a taste test](#) to help children think outside of the box and try some of their favorite foods in new ways.
- Encourage children to think about goals specific to their own personal well-being. Maybe they want to [rethink their drink](#) and drink more water. Maybe they want to log a certain number of steps by the end of the school year. Help them to set these goals with support of family and friends and discuss the power in working together to achieve goals that align or support one another.
- Create a [school garden](#). This is a great activity to demonstrate setting a series of smaller goals to reach a larger one.

Social Emotional Health Highlights

Activities such as these help students explore...

- **Self-Awareness:** Goal setting can be extremely effective in the development of self-awareness. Knowing one's strengths and areas for growth is essential to learning and development. If children learn how to recognize these characteristics early on, they can set goals that will allow them to become better throughout time.
- **Social Awareness:** Sharing our goals with peers and family can be very effective in developing social awareness of others' aspirations, feelings, and perspectives. Asking those around you to help you achieve your goals together creates relationships that go beyond the completion of a task or project and helps you to understand more about each other.
- **Responsible Decision Making:** Goals provide clear outcomes that require making responsible decisions to stay on track and achieve. The best way to learn is by doing! Regardless of whether a goal is reached, goal setting helps

kids take personal responsibility for the actions needed to achieve their goal and reframe failure as an opportunity to grow and learn.

Tips



Start small! Break up lessons on goal setting in smaller chunks in the beginning by having children write down one goal and a set of action steps to start. Use the SMART goal template to refine and get into the nitty-gritty details of what, how, and when they will achieve their goal.



Emphasize that it is okay to not reach your goals the first time around – and how often this actually happens! Help them reframe and begin to look at it as a valuable opportunity to reflect on strengths and areas for growth. Help students identify what barriers or challenges presented themselves and work to reframe and overcome the next time around.



Think outside the box. Goal setting is a powerful tool that can be used at school and at home to empower children's autonomy in decision making and promote self-awareness. Help them use this tool to set goals around specific classes or to develop a new skill, manage stress or anxiety before a big test or presentation, and step outside of their comfort zone to try new things.



Encourage goal setting in the classroom and at home. Share the activities you are doing in the classroom in parent newsletters or communications. Have students share their classroom goals with their families and explore creating mirroring goals for health at home. Hosting a family event? Kick it off with healthy goal setting or start a community campaign to set and achieve a certain number of goals and encourage one another to keep up the hard work!

For more activities and ideas like this one, be sure to [sign up for our news and updates](#). And if you like what you see, please [donate to support our work](#) creating more ways to help build a healthier future for kids.

Resources

[Self-Management Video \(CASEL and ThinkTVPBS\)](#)

[How to Help Your Child Set and Reach Goals](#)

[A Framework for Student Goal Setting](#)

[Build Self-Confidence with a Goal Setting Craft](#)

Build a Better Breakfast

In March, schools across the country celebrate National School Breakfast Week. Take this time to review participation in your school's breakfast program and get students excited about eating breakfast.

Host a Taste Test

Expose your students to a variety of healthy food items so they'll eat better!

More Water, Please!

One of the easiest ways of ensuring kids, school staff and families drink more water is to make water more accessible and fun throughout the day.

Rethink Your Drink

A Rethink Your Drink campaign is a great way to teach kids about the amount of sugar that can be found in commonly consumed beverages.

