

HELPING CHILDREN ACHIEVE SUCCESS AND REACH GOALS: SOME MORE ON STRUCTURING

As children develop language skills, they also learn that sometimes they need to work towards a goal and wait for success.

Very young children don't understand the concept of waiting – think of a two year old: they want the ice cream NOW!

Not when they have put on their sandals,

not when they have finished their dinner,

not when you have hung out the washing.....

But along their growing up journey, children do need to learn about waiting and to learn about how to work towards achieving a goal.

Parents and carers can help children learn these life lessons.

Having a clearly stated goal that children can work towards and feel a sense of achievement can be helped by setting up a simple system where achievement towards a goal is rewarded along the way.

Think of a goal: it may be a way that you would like your child to behave, it may be to do more or less of something.

Be as specific as possible:

Change "I want my child to be nicer to her little brother" to

I want my child to spend 10 minutes playing trucks with her little brother, taking turns to be the driver"

Let her know that

(i) this is an important goal.

(ii) you want her to try her hardest

And

(iii) there will be a reward – she gets to have an extra bedtime story with you

Remember:

1. The greatest reward you can give your child is your love and attention. They will thrive on this. Use lots of this kind of reward.

2. Having rewards like food, games, or special outings teaches children LOTS OF THINGS

- That they have the ability to work towards a goal “I can get my ice cream”
- An experience of success – “wow I got 3 stickers”
- Confidence that they can achieve what they set out to do “my shoes are really clean”

ALL of these help children build the resources that will help them stay focused and on task in their school years.