

Teacher's Guide

Supporting the wellbeing of primary school children

Set goals and chart progress



Helping students achieve a goal by starting small and gradually exposing a student to more complex situations can assist promote self-efficacy, reinforces a student's strengths and builds confidence. Goals can be for a single lesson, daily or weekly.

Process

1. Identify situations where a student experiences difficulties, for example; talking in front of the class. Discuss with the student what they think or feel in that situation. For some students who find it difficult to verbalise what is happening, ask them to draw pictures or select pictures from a set of images, e.g. 'when I am talking in front of the class I am worried about what others are thinking of me and I feel scared'.
2. Encourage coping strategies, such as positive self-talk or relaxation exercises, remind the student to use these strategies whenever they feel stressed.
3. Help the student determine a goal that would see them not experience the difficulty, e.g. 'I would like to be able to talk in front of the class.'
4. Create a step plan with the student that outlines small, achievable steps that a student can work on towards achieving their goal.
5. Visually chart the success of lesson, daily or weekly goals. A reward that is valued by the student could be given if the goals are achieved.
6. Begin by introducing the first step, once the student has mastered this step, introduce the next step and continue until the goal is achieved. Sometimes it may be necessary to move back a step or even renegotiate the steps.
7. Praise and affirm the efforts of the student as they slowly build their confidence and skills.

Step plan example:

1. Imagining talking in front of the class.
2. Being in a group in front of the class but not speaking.
3. Talking in unison with a group in front of the class.
4. Talking on own from within a group in front of the class.
5. Talking on own from in front of the class.

Self-monitoring

Consider ways a student may be able to self-monitor their progress and develop some self-awareness and motivation. For examples; an interval timer may be used to remind students at regular times to be on task, or a checklist for the student to record their own progress.

SMART goals

When developing Step Goals it is helpful to use the Smart Goal concept.

SMART Goals are:

- Specific: clearly stating the who, what, where, when and why
- Measurable: so is clear when the goal has been achieved
- Attainable: achievable for the student
- Relevant: achieving the goal will be beneficial to the student
- Time limited: a deadline for achievement.

If the behaviour persists despite trying a number of interventions, discuss the student's situation with a supervisor or member of the learning and wellbeing support staff at your school.

<https://www.islhd.health.nsw.gov.au/services-clinics/school-link-teachers-guide>