

Grand Area Mentoring / 435-260-9646

Tools for Success

The Secret of Self-Control

In September, The New York Times published an important piece in which Professor Walter Mischel, creator of the legendary marshmallow test, discusses the importance – and the learned skill – of self-control. He says, “Poor kids need self-control skills if they’re going to catch up at school.”

Self-control can help students do more than earn good grades. It can transform their lives in many domains, from academics to extracurricular opportunities like sports to the workplace and home life. Professor Mischel’s marshmallow test showed children who demonstrated better self-control in preschool went on to score higher on the SAT, maintain healthier weights, earn more advanced degrees, and manage difficult situations better.

So how do we teach self-control? Here are four tips:

ONE: If you promise a reward for a particular behavior (like self-control), follow through with the reward. Kids learn to delay gratification only if the gratification arrives. Earning your mentee’s trust in this department may help them embrace delayed gratification elsewhere.

TWO: Role model mental flexibility. Transform “must do” into “want to.” For example, treat filling out your mentor log as a chore but then find pleasure in it. You could say, “I have to fill this out every week, just like you might have to clean your room or do chores around your house or in your classroom. I’ve learned there’s a silver lining with the mentor log – I get to look back on all the fun things we’ve done over the months. What are the good things about doing your chores at home or in class?” Help your mentee find small pleasures or gratification in the tasks that are not fun. Talk about the rewards of taking care of unpleasant obligations, like brushing your teeth. This promotes healthy self-regulation habits.

THREE: Create IF-THEN statements. For example: “**If** I finish this homework assignment, **then** I will get to go outside and play.” Professor Mischel says this approach, when practiced regularly, gives the prefrontal cortex of the brain a chance to kick in and override the impulsive limbic system.

FOUR: Play games that reward self-control. Red Light/Green Light and Simon Says are classics. Reverse the red and green commands for higher cognitive demands. Four square, soccer, and other sports can also help students develop patience and respond appropriately as the play unfolds.



Appelstein DVD Presentation

When? November 20, 4:30PM

Where? HMK, Room 141



You’re invited to 60 minutes of unrivaled video training from the nation’s best at-risk youth specialist, which will touch on: the power of a positive attitude; strength-based communication techniques including: reframing, asking solution-focused questions, and using inspirational metaphors; enhancing empathy and the need to avoid pejorative labeling; self-esteem building; how to use incentives; respectful limit-setting; and more.



This Month in Mentoring

- **November 14: End of Trimester.** Early out. No Mentoring.
- **November 20: Charlie Appelstein DVD presentation.** Join us at HMK, Room 141, 4:30pm, to view his “Power of a Strength-Based Approach in Reshaping the Lives of Children and Youth.” Run time: 60 minutes. Light snacks provided during this excellent presentation. (See box above.)
- **November 26-28: Thanksgiving Break.** No school. No Mentoring.

Grand Area Mentoring

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Janie & Taylor

& 5 YEARS LATER...



Janie & Taylor

Idea of the month #1: Create & Scarf Some Healthy Snacks!

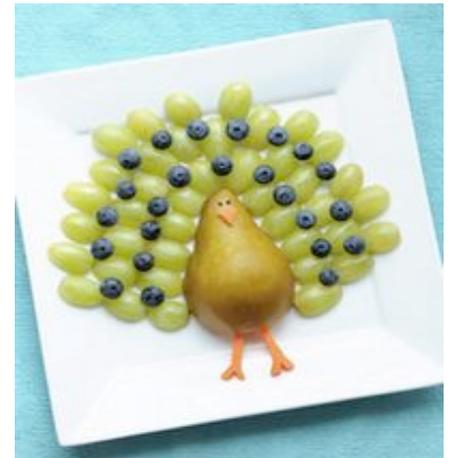
Don't miss this one! This is your chance to combat some of the damage done to your mentee's teeth during Halloween! ☺

You'll need:

- Apples (or pears)
- Toothpicks (or wooden sticks)
- Raisins (or grapes)
- Cheerios
- Piece of carrot for nose
- Peanut butter (if your mentee has peanut allergies, use butter spread)

Directions:

1. Place the toothpicks across the top of apple or pear for "feathers."
2. Use peanut butter to stick cheerios on for eyes & carrot for beak.
3. Spear raisins or grapes on the toothpicks.
4. Feast on a healthy turkey and give thanks for fruit!



Joe & Aeson



Kyra & Jean



Cody & Kevin