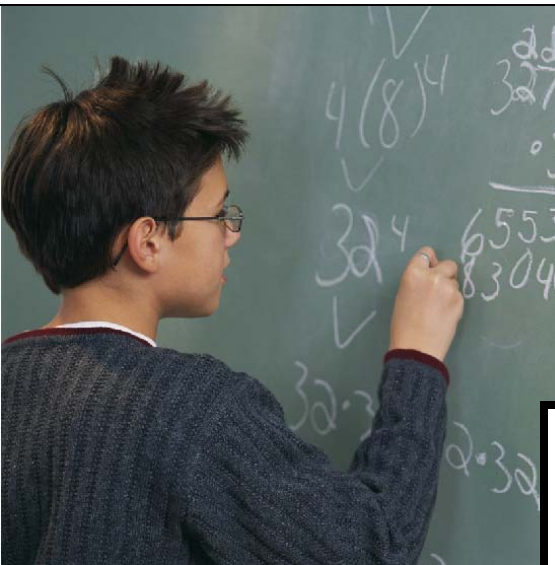


What Successful Students Know, Do, and Are

(The Seven Secret Strengths of School Success)

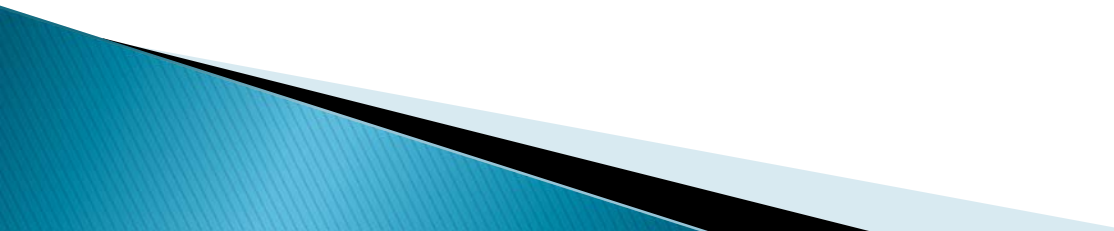
Steve J. Rios, Ed.D.

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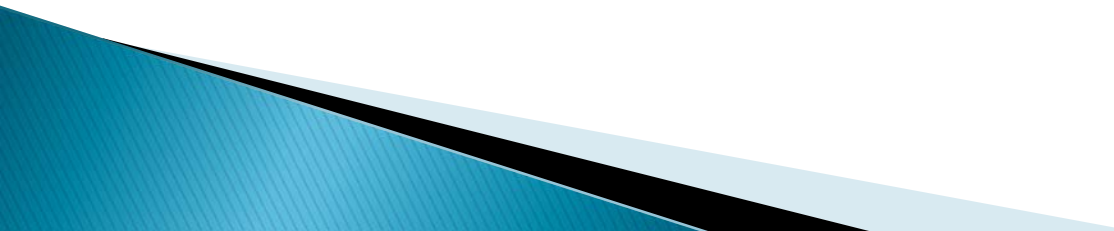


Florida Foster and Adoptive Parent
Association 2009 Education
Conference

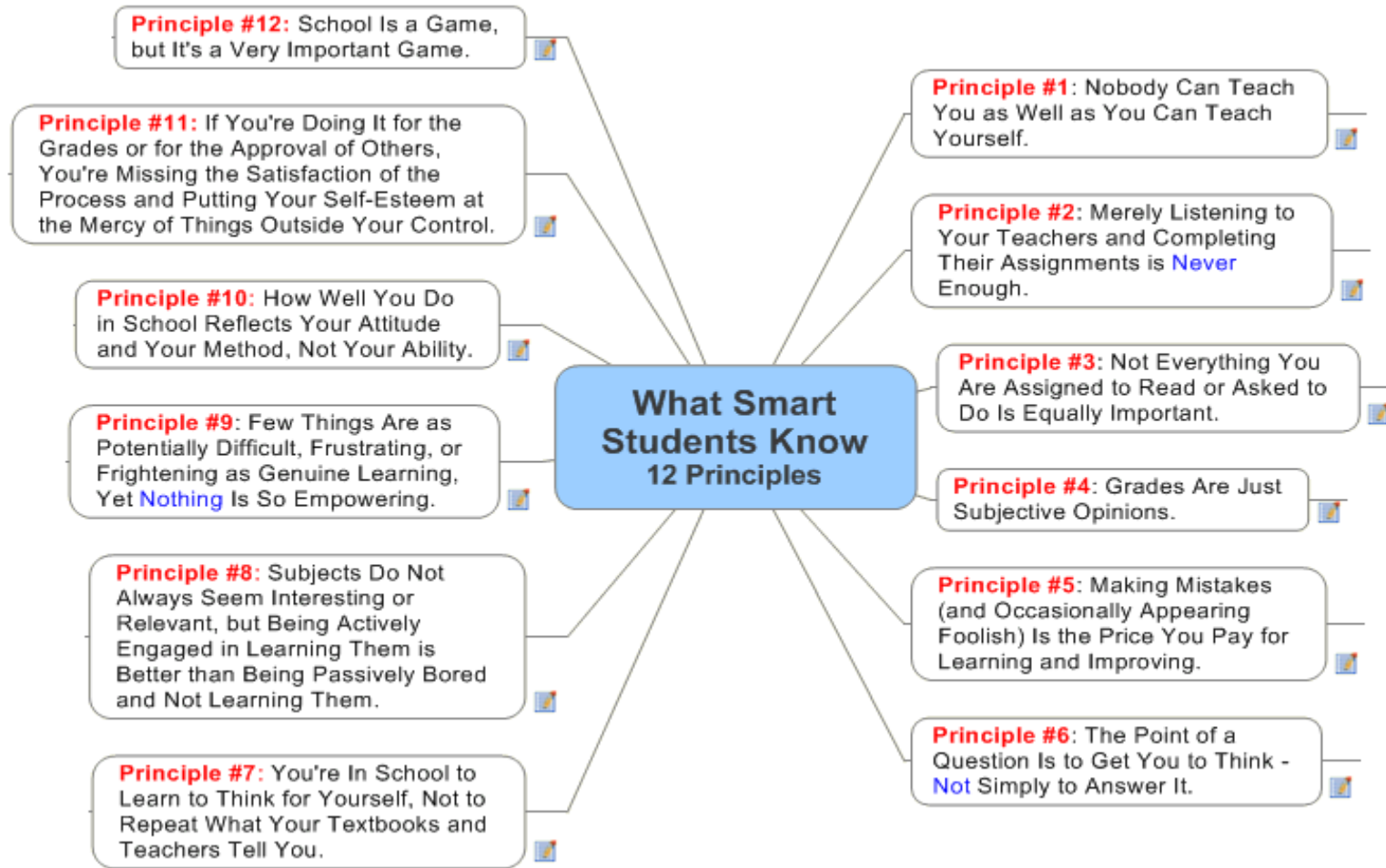
Tonight's Agenda

- ▶ Thank you
 - The line game
 - ▶ What Successful Students DO
 - ▶ What Successful Students KNOW
 - ▶ What Successful Students ARE
 - “The Seven Special Strengths”
 - ▶ Questions and Answers
 - ▶ Wrap-up
- 

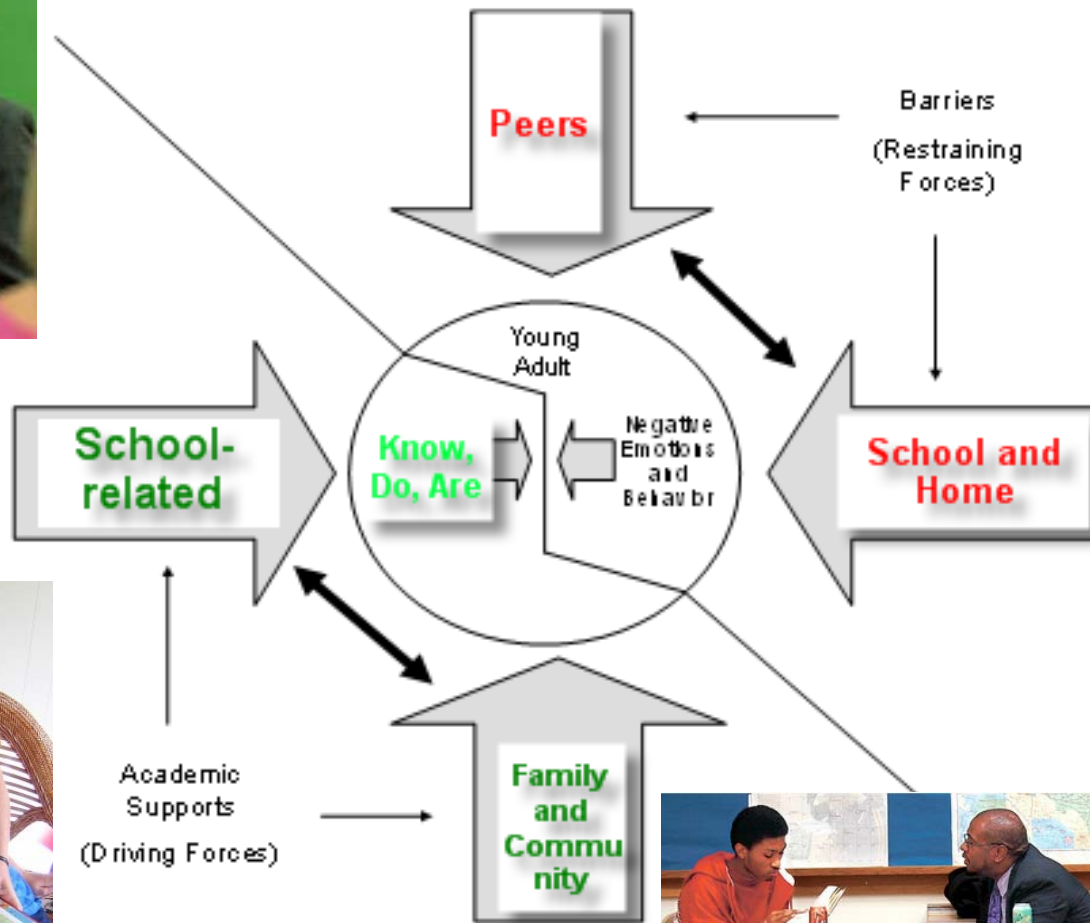
Steve J. Rios

- ▶ Father
 - ▶ Former foster care agency director
 - ▶ Mentor
 - ▶ Adult Educator
 - ▶ Professor of Educational Measurement, Assessment, Research and Statistics at FAU
- 

What Successful Students KNOW



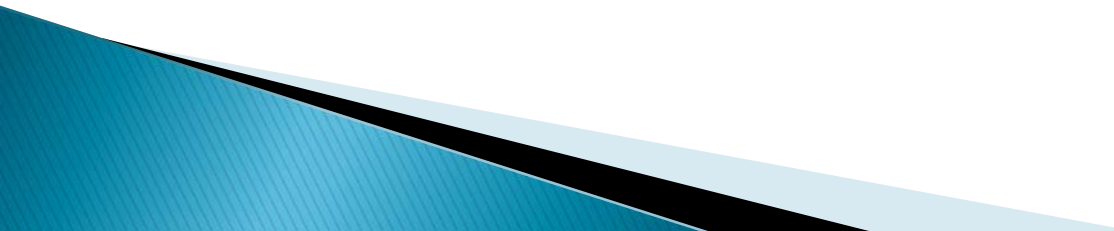
Academic Success Model



Educational Goals



Special

- ▶ Unquestionably notable
 - ▶ Not typical, unusual
 - ▶ Having a specific or particular function, purpose
 - ▶ Different from what is ordinary or usual
 - ▶ Extraordinary; exceptional, as in amount or degree.
- 

Strengths: Defined

- ▶ Term derived from the larger movement related to focusing on strength-based approaches to helping disadvantaged youth
- ▶ Internal assets or personal competencies associated with healthy development and life success
- ▶ Strengths that emerged from participants' narratives are. . .



Strengths: Advantages

- ▶ Empowering alternative to traditional ways of viewing students
- ▶ No discouraging or stigmatizing language (e.g., average student)
- ▶ Opposite of the "victim identity"
- ▶ Fosters hope
- ▶ Emphasizes the positive building blocks that already exist in a child



Strength-based is NOT the norm

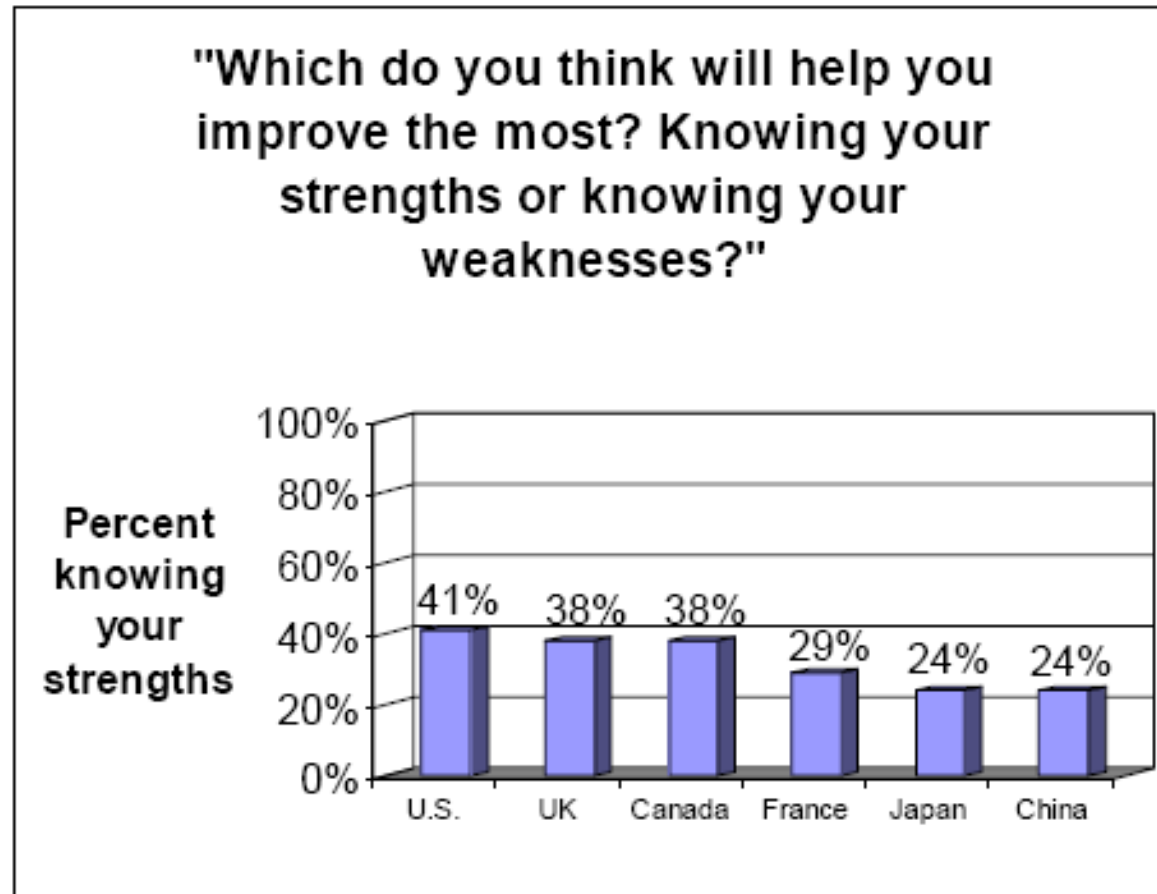


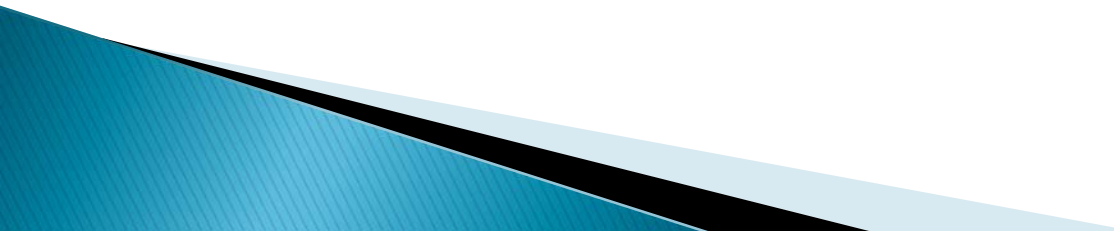
Figure 1. Results of a global Gallup Poll show that people think focusing on weaknesses will help them improve more than focusing on strengths.

The Seven Special Strengths

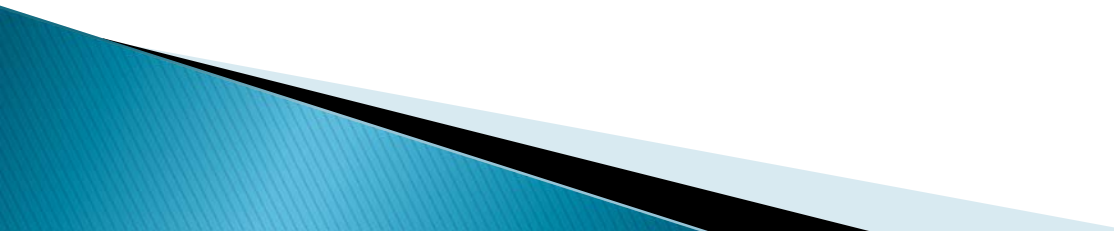
- 1. Diligence**
- 2. Goal orientation**
- 3. Internal motivation**
- 4. Perseverance**
- 5. Self-efficacy**
- 6. Resourcefulness**
- 7. Responsibility**



Diligence:

- ▶ 33% of high school seniors hardly ever open a book after school
 - ▶ U.S. students spent 70 percent less time studying than students in four of the five top-ranked countries. Japan tops.
 - ▶ Students who study too little learn too little
 - ▶ Features of school life and society are contributing to the erosion of academic effort
- 

Diligence: What Parents Can Do

- ▶ Do not push, inspire
 - ▶ Show the effect of academic success
 - ▶ Talk calmly and at appropriate times
 - ▶ When students feel that they are being expected to master some aspect of their learning, they tend to work harder
 - ▶ Societal factors and community factors
- 

Goal Orientation: Quotes

- ▶ If we are facing in the right direction, all we have to do is keep on walking.

~Buddhist Saying

- ▶ *I may not be there yet, but I'm closer than I was yesterday.*

~Author Unknown

- ▶ One may go a long way after one is tired.

~French Proverb

- ▶ *Our greatest glory is not in never failing, but in rising up every time we fail.*

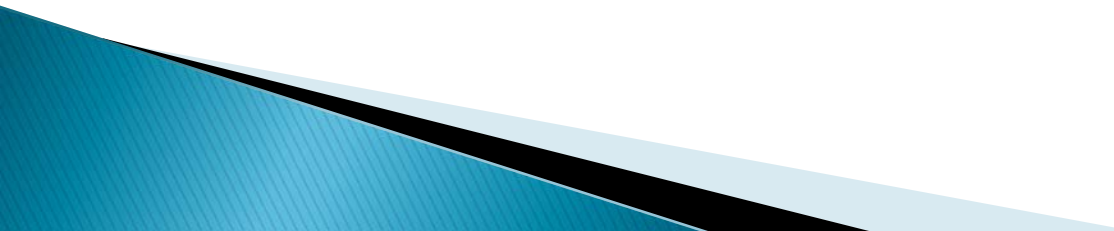
~Ralph Waldo Emerson



What Parents Can Do

- ▶ Help your children develop S.M.A.R.T. Goals
 - S = Specific
 - M = Measureable
 - A = Attainable
 - R = Realistic
 - T = Time-sensitive

SMART Goals: Attainable

- ▶ Attainable mean reachable
 - ▶ Goals that are reachable make the mind start working to help you get there
 - ▶ They spark others who hear about your goals as well
 - ▶ You develop the attitudes, abilities, skills, and financial capacity to reach them.
 - ▶ You begin to plan and the goals become even more attainable
- 

SMART Goals: Realistic

- ▶ Is the goal something that my child is both *willing* to pursue and *able* to attain?
- ▶ A goal can be both high and realistic
- ▶ It needs to come from your child, not you
- ▶ High goals that are desired encourage the necessary energy
- ▶ Low goals with no desire may not encourage ANY effort (i.e., take out the trash)
- ▶ To help your child believe in his or her ability to reach the goal, remind them of something THEY did in the past that was similar – then give them space.

Internal Motivation

- ▶ *What is being suggested here is that motivation not be seen as something existing solely in the student that he or she brings to the classroom and academic tasks; but rather as an outcome of meaningful participation in the classroom and the social practices that accomplish its everyday practical activities.*
 - Sharon Nelson–Le Gall

What motivates students?

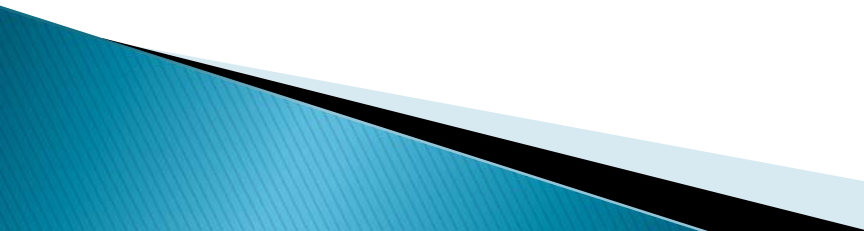
Cognitive Steps in Expectancy, Goal, and Equity Theory

Theory	Expectancy	Goal	Equity
Motivator	Anticipation of receiving a reward.	Intention of achieving the goal.	Achievement of equity or reduction of inequity.
Step 1	Can I do it?	What is the nature of the goal?	How much am I investing in the job?
Step 2	Will I be rewarded?	How committed am I to the goal?	To what extent am I satisfied and gratified by the work?
Step 3	Is the reward something I value?		Is an inequity present? Is my effort equal to the effort of others?

What Parents Can Do

- ▶ **Explain.** What to do or why they should do it.
- ▶ **Reward.** Rather than just criticizing bad grades, reward correct **behavior** and **answers**.
- ▶ **Care.** Be real with children and let them know if you are a bit confused by the project.
- ▶ **Encourage participation.** A lesson about nature, for example, would be more effective walking outdoors than looking at pictures.
- ▶ **Remember that energy sells.** “Hey, let’s do a few jumping jacks together before and after we do homework.” They will work to see you jump!

Perseverance

- ▶ A persistent inner drive and unshakable determination (Bernard, 2004).
 - ▶ An ability to endure in an undertaking in
 - ▶ Perseverance is commitment, hard work, patience, endurance – trying over and over again to success.
 - ▶ Often in the face of criticism and other's disbelief there is a doubt in who you are and in what you are capable of accomplishing.
 - ▶ Perseverance is a commitment, a dedication to yourself, and following through with your actions.
 - ▶ School success and college attainment comes only with perseverance
- 

Resourcefulness

- ▶ Ability to identify and use “external resources and surrogate sources of support”
 - ▶ “help-seeking”
 - ▶ resource utilization
 - ▶ ‘street smarts’
- ▶ Abused children who thrive as adults are able to “become adept at finding and engaging alternative sources of support” (Rubin, 1997, p. 8).
- ▶ Participants’ academic strategies:
 - Seeking advice about schoolwork
 - Obtaining tutors
 - Buying extra study resources
 - Becoming friends with high-performing youth

Resourcefulness: Quote

- ▶ *“I just wanted to get involved more with the smart kids....they only have straight A’s. If they can do it, I can do it. So I just started trying to be nice and we would get together after school. You know...before I would go to football practice, I would talk to them.*

What Parents Can Do

- ▶ **Help your child learn to ask himself or herself the following questions.**
 - Is there another way to get what I want?
 - Is the desired result really the best result?
 - Who else has information that might help me?
 - What is something very similar to what I need that might also work?
 - Who is the expert in this area?
 - What is one more thing I can try?
 - What would someone I admire do in this same situation?

What Parents Can Do

- ▶ **Don't reinvent the wheel**
Look for a solution that someone else has already created. It might be a book, a software program, or someone's existing checklists or procedures.
- ▶ **Leverage your network**
Build and maintain a network of people you can call on for questions and support, and make sure you make yourself available to these same people when they need help from you.
- ▶ **Learn everything you can about how to find information**
Internet, library, bookstore, librarian!
- ▶ **Teach resourceful habits to your family and your team at work**
If your children want to know some information, teach them how to look it up themselves, and show them reference books other than just the dictionary.
- ▶ **Resourcefulness = Necessity + Creativity + Persistence**

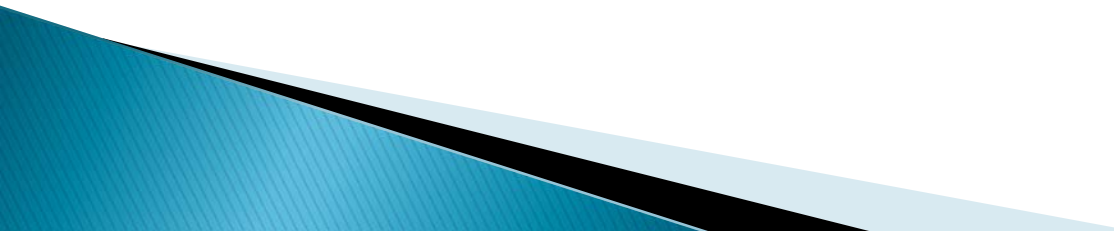
Responsibility

- ▶ “internal locus of control”
- ▶ “generalized sense of being in charge” of one’s own actions was “a key determinant of resilience”
- ▶ “The Toolbox Revisited: Paths to Degree Completion from High School Through College”
- ▶ “first party intervention”
 - ▶ “the commitment of time and effort likely to yield the return of earning a degree” (Adelman, 2006, p. 80).

Responsibility

- ▶ *“If I failed anything, If I didn’t do well, it’s because I didn’t put in the effort. I just didn’t do it” – Andrew*

What Parents Can Do

- ▶ • Create an Environment Where Responsibility Is The Norm
 - ▶ • Modeling Responsibility
 - ▶ • Teach Responsibility Early
 - ▶ • Expect Responsibility
 - ▶ • Expect responsible behavior at all times
 - ▶ • Reinforce Responsibility When You See it
 - ▶ • Stop Irresponsibility Before it Becomes Habit
- 

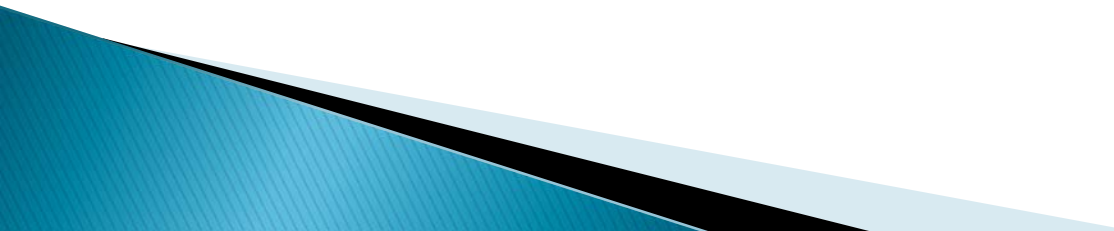
Self-efficacy

- ▶ What young people believe about their academic abilities plays an important role in their educational attainment (Bempechat, 1998).
- ▶ A person who is efficacious believes he or she can “control the events that affect their lives...to realize desired futures and to forestall undesired ones” (Bandura, 1997, p. 1).
- ▶ Individuals who demonstrate self-efficacy, especially during the transition from adolescence, are more likely to do well academically.

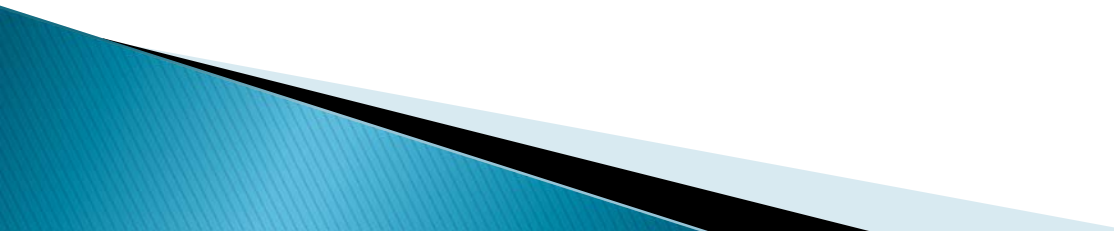
- ▶ *“I was able to do it. Everybody’s able to do it. Even if you are in ESE classes you can do it as long as you apply yourself. And I know that.”*

– Virginia

What Parents Can Do

- ▶ (1) clarifying vague assignments and assisting with the accomplishment of difficult tasks,
 - ▶ (2) recognizing students needs and using them to raise the payoff for successful performance, and
 - ▶ (3) insuring that the allocation of rewards is contingent on the successful accomplishment of the goal or task will induce effort
- 

In Conclusion

- ▶ Now YOU know what Successful KNOW, DO, and ARE
 - ▶ Your challenge?
 - ▶ Help the children and youth YOU KNOW to KNOW, DO, and BE – so they can Become
 - ▶ Successful Students!
 - ▶ Thank you for your time.
- 

Questions and Answers

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