

Demonstrates Consistent Effort

What does “Demonstrates Consistent Effort” mean?

This skill reflects a child’s ability to work through tasks toward a goal. That means handling frustration, staying focused, and not giving up. This skill is about sticking with something even when it is hard. This skill is important because it shows children that their effort matters and gives them confidence when they face challenges.

Demonstrates consistent effort is different from “Strives for quality work”. Strives for quality work is about children trying their best to meet adult expectations for their school work. Demonstrates consistent effort is about children working through challenges, managing frustration, and not giving up when things are difficult.

TIPS for FAMILIES

How can I explain this skill to my child?

Tell your child that it is important that they learn to keep trying, even when something is difficult. When learning something new, it is easy to feel frustrated when you can’t do it right away. If you stop trying, you will never learn. For example, learning to write your name is hard. You have to learn to write one letter at a time and sometimes it might feel like you’ll never be able to write your whole name. But if you keep trying and ask for help when you need it, you will eventually be able to do it! Remind children that even adults get frustrated and need to work hard when they are learning a new skill. Give an example of a skill that you had to work hard at until you got it right.

What are some things I can do to help my child learn this skill?

TIP1

Think like Goldilocks. In a children’s story, a little girl named Goldilocks tastes three bowls of food. One is “too hot”, one is “too cold”, and one is “just right”. For children to learn how to do things by themselves, they need tasks that they are able to work on alone. That means the task shouldn’t be too easy or too hard. Try to identify tasks that are “just right” for your child to do on their own.

Child’s Ability	Too Easy	Too Hard	Just Right
Your child can write the letters A, B, and C and is learning to write D and E.	You ask your child to write the letter A.	You ask your child to write the whole alphabet.	You ask your child to write A, B, C, D, and E. If your child is struggling to write D and E, you let them work through it on their own before you offer help.

TIP2

Teach children to monitor their effort. Young children are not yet able to monitor themselves to make sure they are trying their hardest. You can introduce your child to this idea by encouraging them to think about how much effort they put into a task. Help them reflect on whether they put their best into an activity by asking them questions like:

- How do you feel when you look at this? Does it make you feel good? Do you feel proud?
- We are going to hang this up on the wall. Are you happy with it or do you want to try again?
- Bring this into school to show your teacher how hard you worked. Are you excited about that?

If your child doesn't feel proud and doesn't want to share what they've done, ask them why. If they suggest that they can do better, encourage them to try again until they feel like they've done their best.

TIP3

Show children how to talk their problems out. Learning to talk through problems is one way your child can learn how to keep trying. You can help your child learn this by showing them how you work through challenges. The next time you are struggling with something talk through it out loud. For example, while you are folding laundry, you might say: "I'm getting so angry! Folding this shirt is tricky. I want to give up, but I am not going to. OK, I'm going to take some deep breaths and try again." When you try again, maybe mess up a few times and talk through the mistakes: "Hmm...that's not right. Maybe, if I try this..." When you get it right, share how you feel: "I did it! I'm glad I didn't give up."

TIP4

Show children their progress. Remind your child how far they have come in learning a skill by giving them examples. This is especially helpful if they are having trouble with a new skill. For example, if your child is having trouble learning to tie her shoes, remind her how hard it was for her to learn to do something else (like dress herself in the morning). Because she worked hard and didn't give up, she was able to learn how to dress herself and is now an expert at it. If she keeps trying to tie her shoes and doesn't give up, she will eventually figure out how to do it! Reminding your child of their progress lets them see how working through challenges helps them grow.

How can I encourage my child when I see them trying to learn this skill?

Acknowledge your child for their efforts! For example, tell your child, "Laila, look how hard you are working to read that book!" or "You really tried your best to put that puzzle together, Elijah!"

To learn more about the tips and where they came from, please visit our references page: ckphilly.org/citations