

Strives for Quality Work

What does “Strives for Quality Work” mean?

This skill is about a child understanding adult expectations for school work and doing their best to meet them. In school, adults let students know what their expectations are and then determine if children meet these standards. When striving for quality work, children do the best they can, even if they do not ultimately meet the expectations set by the adult. This skill is important because it shows that children understand what is expected of them and are working hard to produce their best work at school.

“Strives for quality work” is different from “Demonstrates consistent effort”. Strives for quality work is about children *working their hardest* 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?

Explain to your child that you are like a coach for your family. It is the coach’s job to set expectations for the players to make sure they are ready to play the game. For example, a coach might ask the players to do a lot of things before a big game, like run ten times around the field or do 100 jumping jacks. The coach sets the expectations and the players try to meet them so they will be ready for the game. Let your child know that you believe in them and that they have what it takes to meet your expectations. If they listen to your expectations and work hard to meet them, they will be successful!

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

TIP1

Make sure expectations are heard and understood. Before your child can work their hardest to meet expectations, expectations must be heard and understood. Young children may sometimes feel confused about what is being asked of them and may not meet expectations because they don’t know what they are. To make sure expectations are clear, you can:

- Communicate expectations as simply as possible by speaking slowly.
- Give one expectation at a time.
- Ask children to repeat the expectation back to you to make sure they heard it.

TIP2

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.” It is important that expectations are set at the appropriate level for your child. If expectations are too high, children will get discouraged. If expectations are too low, children will get bored or may feel that you don’t value their skills. Try to set expectations for your child that are “just right” for their ability level.

Child’s Ability	Expectations are Too Low	Expectations are Too Low	Expectations are Just Right
The child can tie his shoes if given the time to do it.	You don’t expect anything of your child. You tie his shoes for him.	You tell your child you expect him to be at the door with his shoes tied right now.	You tell your child you expect him to try his best to tie his shoes by himself in the next 20 minutes.

TIP3

Ask your child to reflect. When your child is struggling to meet expectations, it can be helpful to walk them through some questions to reflect about what they did and why they did it. It is difficult for young children to reflect on their own, so try leading them through questions that help them think about what they did. It is important that they start thinking about these things, even if they are not able to fully answer these questions yet. Remember to approach your child with a calm and supportive attitude to coach them through these questions. Here are some example questions you can ask:

- Can you tell me what I asked you to do?
- Were you confused about what I asked you to do?
- Did you need help?
- How could you have gotten help if you needed it?
- Did you try your best?
- If you didn’t try your best, why do you think that happened?
- What are some things you can do differently if this happens again?

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, “You worked your hardest to color inside the lines just like I asked, Keisha!” or “James, you really tried your best to put your clothes away the way I asked you to do it!”

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