

Grit/Extracurricular Activities

Extracurricular activities are fertile soil in which passion and perseverance take root. Parents have an extraordinary opportunity to help their children develop grit and resilience by how they approach/talk about their child's participation in their pursuits outside of the classroom. Below are some of the messages that your child needs to hear to reinforce the tenacity that is essential to get through the tough times.

1. **Endless repetitions.** It's reps. Doing something over and over and over again. Help your kids see the broader significance of practice.
2. **Slow everything down.** The slower they practice, they can see their progress and what needs more practice.
3. **An appreciation of failure.** Most of us fail before we succeed. In part, we send our children to coaches and teachers to learn character. We want them to discover the magic of repetition, of slowing things down to focus on an area of improvement, and failing failing failing in order to succeed.
4. Communicate to your child that there is more to competing than winning. The victor doesn't always walk off the field with the championship trophy.

A wrestling coach once told me, "I don't coach wrestling, I coach life."

The founder of a dance program in New Mexico says: "We don't just teach dance. We teach excellence."

One of the best math teachers I've ever seen tells his students, "Why are you learning math? Because math is hard. And in my classroom, you learn how to do hard things."

For more on this topic:

<https://characterlab.org/thoughts-of-the-week/practice-makes-perseverance/>

The Staples Resilience Project is an ongoing endeavor by the Staples Guidance Department aimed to promote the well-being of our students and foster a positive, inclusive school community.

shs.westportps.org/departments/guidance/staples-resilience-project