



**CAREER AND COLLEGE**  
Gifted Services  
Excellence in Education

Onslow County Schools

# AIG Focus

**Monthly Goal: Student persists on tasks even when his/her initial efforts are not successful.**

## Teaching Kids to Have Grit

In psychology, grit is based on an individual's passion, motivation, and determination to achieve a certain goal. The American Psychological Association states that grit is what separates the very best from those who are simply good enough. Angela Duckworth, psychologist, has found that a combination of grit as well as self-control, reliance, and ambition were the most reliable predictors of a positive outcome, rather than intelligence.

So, how do we teach our children to have grit?

- **Let your kid find a passion.** One of the characteristics of "gritty" people is that they are motivated to seek happiness through continued focused engagement and they strive for meaning and purpose.
- **Place kids in activities out of their comfort zone.**
- **Let your kid get frustrated.** When kids never have the ability to succeed at something difficult, they may never develop confidence in their ability to confront challenges. Don't let kids quit just because they are having a bad day.
- **Model a growth mindset.** Carol

Dweck, Stanford professor, has found that people with growth mindsets are more resilient and tend to push through struggles because they believe that hard work is part of the process and they do not believe that failure is a permanent condition.

- **Brainstorm together.** Help them brainstorm strategies and make a plan of what actions they will take and how they will proceed, but allow them to take ownership of the solution.
- **Teach that failing is okay.**
- **Discuss effort not accomplishments.**
- **Be a gritty parent.** The best way for kids to learn to be "grittier" is from watching their parents. Show kids that you take on tasks that are sometimes scary, and that you sometimes struggle or fail and then bounce back.

It is within this learning process that they will develop perseverance, resiliency, and true grit, which will lead them in the direction of success for their future.

To read more about teaching kids to have grit, read "How and Why to Teach Kids to Have More Grit" by Jill Ceder, LMSW, JD.

## Director's Discussion

Grit is a very interesting topic and continues to get a great deal of attention (for good reason). It may be good to also look at what we need to guard against if we hope kids will develop appropriate levels of grit.

Top 10 Enemies of Developing Grit:

1. Overprotection
2. Lack of Consistent Effort and Practice
3. Unrealistic Expectations
4. Speaking in Fixed Mindsets
5. Creating Overly Stressful Situations
6. Lack of Role Models
7. Lack of Support
8. Unstructured Time
9. Failure to Praise Effort
10. Consistently Allowing Task Avoidance

Ultimately, grit develops gradually as kids face challenges, make efforts toward their goals, and receive support from their environment. A combination of high expectations, emotional support, and opportunities for growth helps them build the persistence they need to achieve their long-term dreams.

Dr. Michael Elder, Director,  
College and Career Readiness

## A note from your specialist...

Here's a snapshot of what we've been doing in our AIG pullout groups:

Amidst days at home due to holidays and snow, our fourth and fifth graders were able to reflect on progress toward gifted goals for the first half of the year in January. Newly-identified third graders began their year with an introduction to gifted services based on the first chapters from *101 Success Secrets for Gifted Kids*.

Fourth and fifth grade readers completed their remix poetry stanzas to ring in the new year. Later, they used deliberation skills to

examine multiple perspectives in the thinkLaw lesson "Snow Day Hero." (The consensus seemed to be a preference for traditional snow days as opposed to remote learning days!) Third graders are beginning a science fiction novel study. They are off to a great start with *The Green Book*!

In math, fifth graders explored relational thinking through the AIG-IRP activity "The Expression Extractor", while both fourth and fifth graders developed area/perimeter

awareness and computational fluency through assorted strategy activities from *Mindset Mathematics*, including "Cover the Field" and "Target 20". Our third graders are also being exposed to multiple strategy activities, such as "Aces, Jumble, Zilch" and "24 Game".

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