

# School Psychologist Corner

October, 2016

As we get ready for our first round of school report cards, we want to take a moment to address how to help your child even if they get a poor grade. This month we are talking about how we can help kids learn from mistakes and failure! How we respond to our children's mistakes can affect their self-esteem and motivation. Helping them learn from their mistakes while still having natural consequences, helps them develop into more thoughtful young adults!

**Check out these simple tips!**

## Grades

**A parenting tip from Love & Logic**



There's no doubt that grades are important! Because they are so important, many parents make the mistake of displaying a lot of anger and frustration when their kids get poor ones. When this happens, kids spend more energy thinking about their parents' anger and frustration than thinking about how their grades will affect their lives. Listed below are some quick tips for responding to poor grades:

- Spend most of your energy commenting on the good grades. The key is to help your child feel so good about what they do well that they will be willing to work harder at what they don't do well.
- Display sadness over the bad grades. Experiment with saying, "This is so sad. I'm sure glad that I didn't get that grade. The good news is that we are going to love you regardless of how well or poorly you do in school."
- Ask questions about the bad grades like "What are your thoughts about the grade?" or "Do you have any plan to deal with the subject?" or "What sort of help can we give you on this?"
- If consequences for poor grades aren't motivating your child to do their work, stop providing them. When this occurs, it means that there are other issues that need to be dealt with first. These include helping your child develop a better self-concept, teaching them responsibility through chores, helping them with learning problems or different learning styles, etc.
- Remember that good character is more important for life-long success than good grades.

## Ten Parenting Guidelines that Help Kids Learn from Mistakes

An excerpt from: *Marilyn Price-Mitchell, PhD, a developmental psychologist working at the intersection of youth development, leadership, education, and civic engagement.*

- Acknowledge that you don't expect your children to be perfect.
- Let them know your love is unconditional, regardless of their mistakes or lapses in judgment.
- Don't rescue children from their mistakes. Instead, help them focus on the solution.
- Provide examples of your own mistakes, the consequences, and how you learned from them.
- Encourage them to take responsibility for their mistakes and not blame others.
- Avoid pointing out their past mistakes. Instead, focus on the one at hand.
- Praise them for their ability to admit their mistakes.
- Praise them for their efforts and courage to overcome setbacks.
- Mentor them on how to apologize when their mistakes have hurt others.
- Help them look at the good side of getting things wrong!

