

Resource

FOR PARENT AND CAREGIVERS

MAKING A RESOLUTION AND/OR SETTING AN INTENTION WITH YOUR CHILD



Photograph by Amy Lane on Pixabay

New Years is a time of reflecting on the past year and planning for the new one. Most of us are ready to put last year behind us and have high hopes for the coming year. One way that we can enter the new year in a thoughtful way is to create a resolution or set an intention.

A resolution is a solid, concrete course of action with a firm, determined outcome. An intention is a course of action that guides your choices and behavior. Deborah Demander Reno states “resolutions are typically rigid and well defined, intentions are flexible and malleable with changing circumstances.” In her blog titled [Resolutions and Intentions: Three Simple Steps to Change Your Life](#), Reno describes simple but profound ways that adults can set their own resolutions and intentions. She also helps us to understand the difference between resolutions and intentions.

Lexi Walters White describes how to help children set a goal - in other words, a resolution - for the new year. Her post titled [How to help your child set a New Years Goal- And Stick with it!](#) describes simple steps to set an effective goal with your child, including 1) making resolutions can help children to positively change their behavior, 2) good resolutions involve making a reasonable and achievable goal, and 3) regular check-ins and progress charts can support kids to stay on track. She suggests an effective resolution using the SMART goal method.

S	Specific
M	Measurable
A	Attainable
R	Results-oriented & Relevant
T	Time-Bound

For example, a child might say, “I want to be the most popular kid in school.” But a more effective goal would be, “I will make more friends this year twice a month,” or “I will invite a friend over after school.” White also offers suggestions for academic and athletic resolutions. Moreover, she shares that even if your child doesn’t achieve the goal fully, they will be working on self-reflection, [self-advocacy](#), [self-awareness](#), problem-solving, [self-control](#), and [self-esteem](#).

Dr. Dustine Rey, an educational psychologist, and parent states: “designing clear intentions for you and as a family can have a powerful impact on motivation, optimism, connection, and self-worth.” Her post titled [Designing New Years Intentions with Children](#) includes simple steps to set intentions for a new year as a family. She suggests that you, as a family, first discuss favorite moments as a family such as a dinner time or walking to the school bus. Then you can discuss emotions that are relevant to these moments such as joy or happiness. Next, you set a resolution with your child. For example, we will express what we are grateful for before bedtime or we will be more kind to each person in our family. Finally, you help your child to

draw a picture or create a piece of art that depicts your intentions. Then you can display the artwork in a prominent place in your home to help remind you and your child of your special intention.

Whether you decide to make a resolution or set an intention with your child, both offer great opportunities to start this new year off in a positive way. Happy New Year!

Age(s):

PreK 3-5 yrs (preschool)

5-6 yrs (kindergarten)

6 to 8 (Primary)

9 to 11 Years (Elementary)

11 to 14 Years (Middle School)

14-18 years (High School)

Tags:

Social-Emotional Learning

Developer:

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Credit:



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