

Slide
1

Getting Kids Motivated for School!

Strategies to foster your child/teen's motivation to achieve in school

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Dr. Graham Hartke, Psy.D.
Psychologist (NJ Lic. #5014)
104 Eagle Rock Avenue
Roseland, NJ 07068
Tel. 973-228-2299

Slide
2

Overview of Webinar

- What motivates you?
- Motivation Overview
- DRIVE: A framework for fostering motivation

Slide
3

Motivation

- Motivation: A person's reason for behaving a certain way
 - Future behavior: Why we want to act a certain way
 - Past behavior: Why we acted a certain way
- Characteristics
 - Internal state, drive, desire, force, want, arousal
 - Activates, energizes behavior
 - Influences persistence
 - Fluid, variable, changeable
 - Can have different "levels" of motivation
 - Provides direction for goals

Slide
4

Motivation Types

- Intrinsic Motivation
 - We do something because it is enjoyable, and interesting (we do it for the activity itself)
- Extrinsic Motivation
 - We do something to obtain an outcome separate from the activity itself

Slide
5

Motivation: Influencing Factors

- Individual Level
 - Bio-neurological, cognitive, developmental, psycho-social, health, behavior, past experiences, attitude, vision/values
- Local Environmental Level
 - Family, School, Social
- Larger Environmental Level
 - Laws, regulations, policies, politics, culture, history, world events

Slide
6

Motivation Influencing: Factors

- Family
 - Family support, stress, home environment, SES, vision-value of academics, expectation for academic achievement
- School
 - School culture and environment, teachers, curriculum, instructional methods, classroom, achievement-testing standards, workload, scheduling, communication, transportation
- Social
 - Classmates, peers, socializing outside of school, risky behaviors, highly reinforcing outside interests/activities
 - (Video games, phone, TV, youtube, social media, etc)

Slide
7

Motivation: Research

- Much research on this topic
- Motivation is linked with academic success
- Intrinsic and Extrinsic motivation are effective for motivating students
 - Girls more intrinsic than boys
- Higher intrinsic motivation predictive of academic success
- Generally consistent findings across cultures
- Boredom and achievement linked
 - Boredom affects performance and vice versa

Slide
8

Unmotivated Students

- School is boring (class, homework)
- See little value in what they are learning (What is the point? Relevance)
- Level of challenge (too much, too little)
- Learning and Behavioral Difficulties
- Mental and physical health
- Family-home life, stress, trauma
- Social life, peers, classmates, teachers
- Past failures, sense of competency

Slide
9

Student Motivation

- 81% feel they belong and are happy at school*
- 80% I enjoy learning new things
- 77% I put forth my best effort at school
- 50% students interested in learning math*
- 50% 12th Graders "School is boring" 32% 6th Graders
- 47% teachers make school an exciting place to learn
- 40% do not feel engaged in their learning
- 20% of 15 year old students skipped a class or day*
- 14% see no connection between school and future

Data: Pearson foundation 2014, *OECD 2012

Slide
10

Motivation Theories

- Self Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci)
 - Autonomy, Relatedness, Competence**
- Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura)
 - Self-Efficacy: belief in capability to perform/produce**
- Control Value Theory (Pekrun)
 - Emotions linked to academic activity and outcome**
- Operant Learning Theory (Skinner)
 - Reinforcement and Punishment**
- Collaborative Problem Solving (Greene)
 - Students do well if they can: some have lagging skills**

(Note there are many theories related to motivation, these are just a few selected ones...)

Slide
11

Putting it together: Developing Motivation

- Build intrinsic motivation by developing**
 - Autonomy, Competence, Skills, Self-efficacy
- Build positive academic emotions by developing**
 - Ability to control achievement activities/outcomes, and student's value of them
 - Positive relatedness with adults
 - Decrease boredom, increase enjoyment
- Use reinforcement/ punishment meaningfully**
 - Linking meaningful and appropriate rewards, and punishment to academic performance only to extent that is needed

Slide
12

Developing Motivation in Students: General Principals

- Many factors influence motivation
- Use combination of motivational strategies
- People differ on what works best for them
 - Customize for individual, as individual ages
 - What worked for you (Parents and teachers) as a student might not work for your student
 - What works for you now (parents and teachers) might not work now for your student

Slide
13

Motivating Students: DRIVE

A practical framework (Hartke, 2014)

- **D**evelop and identify skill strengths & weaknesses
- **R**ealize success in the classroom
- **I**nclude student input in learning process
- **V**alue enjoyment and meaning in learning
- **E**xternal reinforcement and punishment

Slide
14

Motivating Students: DRIVE (Hartke, 2014)

Develop and identify skill strengths & weaknesses

- Low motivation and bad academic experiences often result from a lack of
 - Knowledge, Skills and Abilities (KSA's) related to:
 - Organization, maintaining attention, and completing home work
 - Ross Greene: Kids do well if they can
- First step in motivating an unmotivated student:
 - **Find out why they are not motivated**
- Do this by:
 - Asking student directly, have student input
 - Assess learning, behavior, organization, social, family, etc.
 - Ross Greene's ALSUP could be helpful

Slide
15

Motivating Students: DRIVE (Hartke, 2014)

Develop and identify skill strengths & weaknesses

- Identify strengths and weaknesses related to
 - **Organization**
 - Planners, calendars, folders, binders, computer files
 - Goal setting
 - Condition of locker, desk, backpack
 - Time management, prioritizing, stress management
 - **Attention**
 - Actively listening, maintaining focus, getting back on track when mind drifts, identifying and limiting distractions
 - **Completing Homework**
 - When, where, how homework is completed
 - Getting started, procrastination
 - Limiting distractions, making process more efficient

Slide
16

Motivating Students: DRIVE (Hartke, 2014)
Develop and identify skill strengths & weaknesses

- Develop organizational strategies with student
 - Help with assignment book, and binder/folder
 - If trouble with traditional organizational methods, develop a different system that works for student
 - Teachers who require one way to organize files could offer a modified method for struggling students
 - Electronic calendar, Google, folder, email with teacher
 - Collaboration is key, come up with 1 thing that sticks
 - Reduce clutter if backpack/ locker is messy

Slide
17

Motivating Students: DRIVE (Hartke, 2014)
Develop and identify skill strengths & weaknesses

- Goals
 - Process goals: Actionable, controllable
 - Focused on the process of what you do (studying, working etc...)
 - For each goal develop an activity you can perform to help reach that goal, and a way to check that goal
 - **Focus on these**
 - **Be specific:** Going to do 30 min of HW in the dining room at 5pm
 - Outcome goals: Not directly controllable
 - Grades, teacher's evaluation, college acceptance
 - Provides vision, milepost, inspiration

Slide
18

Motivating Students: DRIVE (Hartke, 2014)
Develop and identify skill strengths & weaknesses

- Homework and Procrastination
 - Create distraction free homework space
 - Bedroom/dining room/kitchen could be bad spots
 - Focus on getting started and reduce **Red Flags**
 - Things that keep from starting or continuing homework
 - This includes both BEFORE STARTING AND DURING HOMEWORK
 - Unless absolutely necessary: No phones, TV, Games
 - Set start time and stick to it (no excuses)
 - No distractions before start time
 - Set end time and stick to it
 - End at least 30 min before bed time
 - Being rested and fed before doing HW is important

Slide
19

Motivating Students: DRIVE (Hartke, 2014)

Develop and identify skill strengths & weaknesses

- Homework and Procrastination
 - HW is more enjoyable when it does not take hours
 - Improved HW efficiency = more enjoyable
 - Improved academic emotion = more motivation
- If large amount of HW is greatly impacting motivation and achievement:
 - Reduce the amount of time spent on HW by even a little
 - Talk to school, teachers
 - Seriously look at distractions, stick to bed time
 - If it does not effect quality, prioritize work, skim, filter out less important information
 - Learning how to complete a large amount of HW efficiently is a skill teachers could review with students

Slide
20

Motivating Students: DRIVE (Hartke, 2014)

Realize success in the classroom

- Developing competence and self-efficacy is key
- Students who feel that they can effectively attempt or complete school work will persevere more than those that don't
- Need to build successes, focus on the positives
- Classwork should be at right level
 - Challenge them, not too easy, or too difficult
- Give praise for both the work effort and ability
- Be specific, genuine
- Parents can speak with teachers about building on strengths

Slide
21

Motivating Students: DRIVE (Hartke, 2014)

Include student input in learning process

- Motivation increases when students feel empowered, engaged and connected
- The more autonomy, creativity and input students have the more motivated they will be
 - Applies to the classroom, and working on HW and organizational strategies with parents
- **Student feeling of "relatedness" to teacher is major factor**
 - **Feeling that teacher respects, likes, values student**
 - Can be what helps motive when academic material has little intrinsic value

Slide
22

Motivating Students: DRIVE (Hartke, 2014)

Include student input in learning process

- Talk with your student
 - What do/don't you like about school?
 - How can school be better?
 - Why is school important?
 - What do you want to do after high school?

Slide
23

Motivating Students: DRIVE (Hartke, 2014)

Include student input in learning process

- As students get older provide guided autonomy
 - **Key for adolescents**
 - Let them take more responsibility, have more input
 - Guide them, gradually giving more freedom
 - Parent have to give up some control (less "helicoptering")
 - Students might need to try it on their own to grow, learn to take care of themselves, even if they have trouble at first
 - Let them wake themselves up, have more say in when and how they do homework

Slide
24

Motivating Students: DRIVE (Hartke, 2014)

Value enjoyment and meaning in learning

- Make learning valuable and meaningful
 - Students are more likely to be motivated when they see learning in the larger context (big picture)
 - Instead of just that one difficult problem or essay
 - Lessons should link to meaning
 - How does this relate to students or help them?
 - Understanding by Design: good model (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005)
 - Teachers and parents check for larger understanding
 - Why is this important? How does this relate to you?

Slide
25

Motivating Students: DRIVE (Hartke, 2014)

Value enjoyment and meaning in learning

- Talk to children from a young age about your views and values related to education
 - This has a big impact on students
- Model and demonstrate positive values and views
- Expose children to different types of learning from an early age
- Get kids excited about learning outside of school
- Teachable moments, captivate them

Slide
26

Motivating Students: DRIVE (Hartke, 2014)

Value enjoyment and meaning in learning

- Emotions play a significant role in motivation
- Change emotion ---> change behavior
 - Establish good rapport with students
 - Be open to feedback
 - Talk with them, value their opinion and concerns
 - Give positive and constructive feedback
 - Make classroom instruction fun and engaging
 - Make the work meaningful
 - Provide creative outlets and autonomy
 - Don't over do it assigning homework when possible

Slide
27

Motivating Students: DRIVE (Hartke, 2014)

External reinforcement and punishment

- Reinforcement (Causes target Bx to increase)
 - Reinforcer should be strong enough to motivate
 - Reward menu important: Child has choices
 - Rewards should only be available if they earn it
 - Reward is a privilege that needs to be earned
 - Must be consistent
 - Reward should be "just big enough" and relative to task completed
 - (ex. should not get a \$1 million for doing HW once)

Slide
28

Motivating Students: DRIVE (Hartke, 2014)

External reinforcement and punishment

- Keep plans simple & linked to a few specific behaviors
 - Focus on process goals: Do homework for 30 minutes
- Make sure relationship between behavior and reinforcer is made clear
- Adjust plans as child changes
 - Older students can reward themselves (only can watch TV after HW done)

Slide
29

Motivating Students: DRIVE (Hartke, 2014)

External reinforcement and punishment

- Parents:
 - Can make activities contingent on school work effort (focus more on work effort process than outcomes (grades)) – point chart, checklist, report card
 - Cell phone, computer/video games, Praise, points, items
- Teachers:
 - Verbal praise, prompt and constructive feedback, class behavior mod system, points and tangible rewards
- Try not to rely only on external reinforcement and punishment
 - Motivation is strongest when it is more internal-intrinsic
 - Need to build intrinsic motivation

Slide
30

Motivating Students: DRIVE (Hartke, 2014)

External reinforcement and punishment

- Punishment (Decreases target Bx)
 - Low grades, detention, suspension, grounding, removal of privileges
 - Should be consistent
 - Can be effective at motivating some students
 - Can have opposite effect for other students
 - To be maximally effect needs to involve:
 - Clarification of reasons
 - Plan to address underlying issues

Slide
31

Motivating Very unmotivated students

- Establish strong relationships with student
 - Schools: identify those students and establish a faculty mentor for that student
- Find some buy-in for school (sports, clubs, future)
 - Need to spend time on why, success opportunities
- External reinforcements and punishments
- Collaborative problem solving/ flexibility with all parties
- Support services, IEP, 504,
- Depressed students: Behavioral activation, Tx

Slide
32

Comments Questions?

- Thank you
- Contact information
 - Graham Hartke, Psy.D. Psychologist
 - West Essex Psychological Associates, LLC
 - (973) 228-2299 www.westessexpsych.com
 - 104 Eagle Rock Ave Roseland, NJ 07068

Slide
33

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