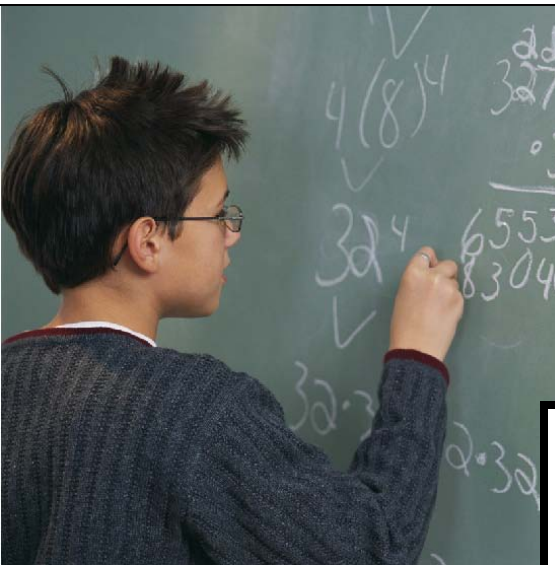


What Successful Students Know, Do, and Are

(The Seven Secret Strengths of School Success)

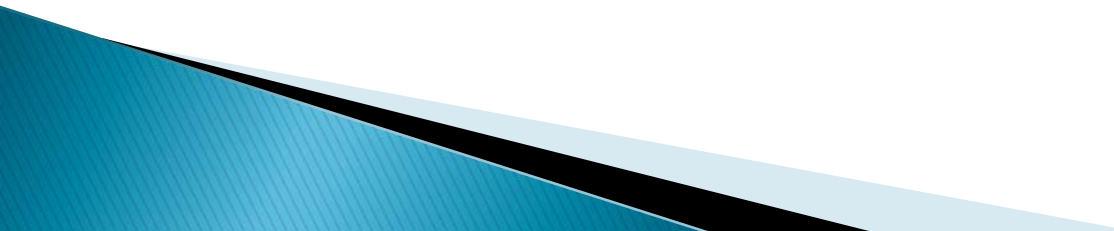
Steve J. Rios, Ed.D.

Florida Atlantic University

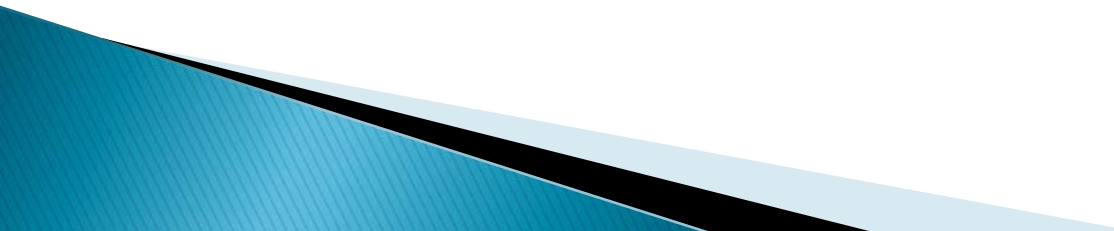


Florida Foster and Adoptive Parent
Association 2009 Education
Conference

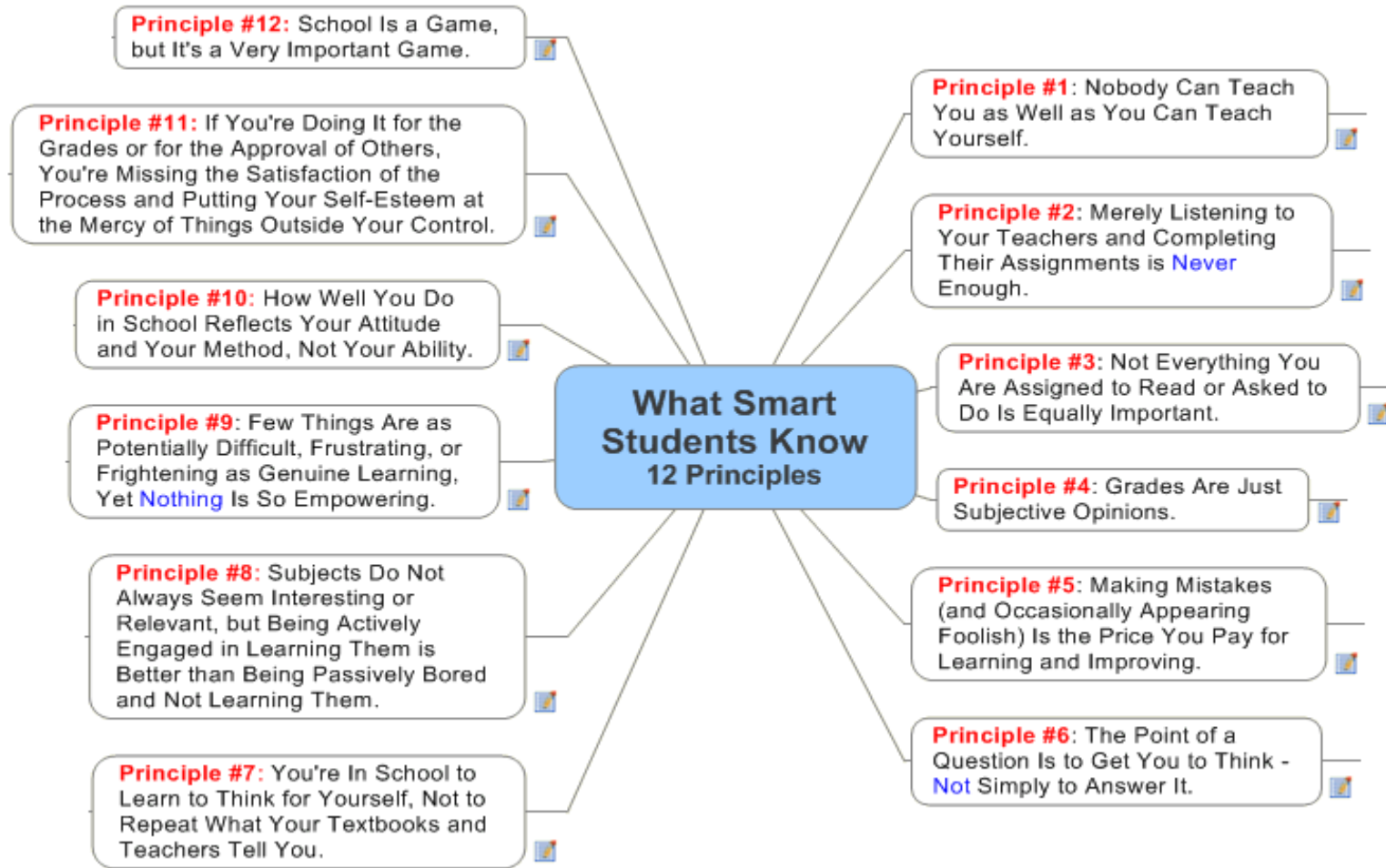
Tonight's Agenda

- ▶ Thank you
 - The line game
 - ▶ What Successful Students DO
 - ▶ What Successful Students KNOW
 - ▶ What Successful Students ARE
 - “The Seven Special Strengths”
 - ▶ Questions and Answers
 - ▶ Wrap-up
- 

Steve J. Rios

- ▶ Father
 - ▶ Former foster care agency director
 - ▶ Mentor
 - ▶ Adult Educator
 - ▶ Professor of Educational Measurement, Assessment, Research and Statistics at FAU
- 

What Successful Students KNOW

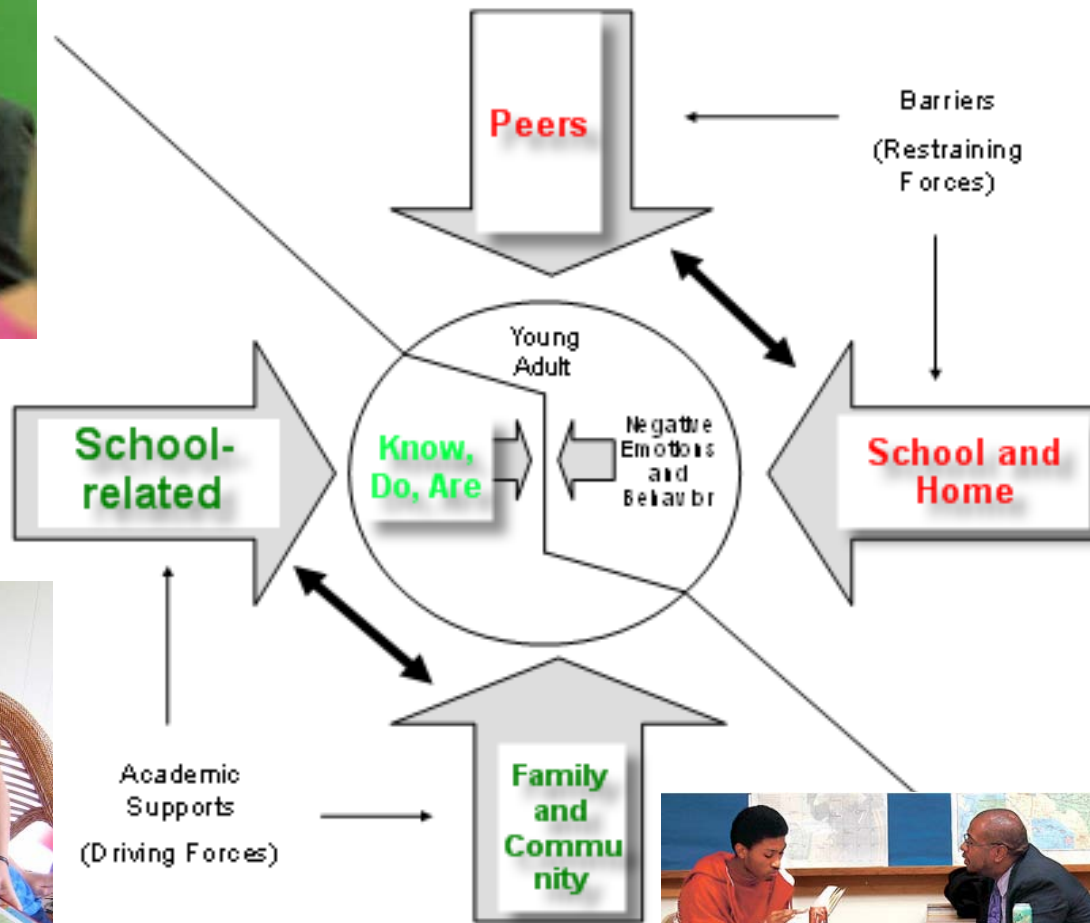


Special

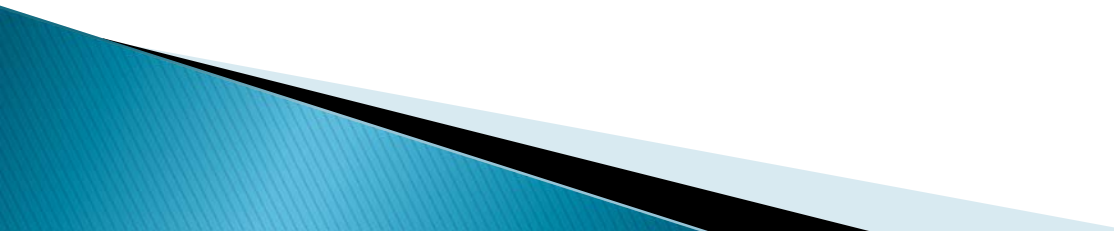
The Seven ~~Secret~~ Strengths of School Success



Academic Success Model



Special

- ▶ Unquestionably notable
 - ▶ Not typical, unusual
 - ▶ Having a specific or particular function, purpose
 - ▶ Different from what is ordinary or usual
 - ▶ Extraordinary; exceptional, as in amount or degree.
- 

Strengths: Defined

- ▶ Term derived from the larger movement related to focusing on strength-based approaches to helping disadvantaged youth
- ▶ Internal assets or personal competencies associated with healthy development and life success
- ▶ Strengths that emerged from participants' narratives are. . .



Strengths: Advantages

- ▶ Empowering alternative to traditional ways of viewing students
- ▶ No discouraging or stigmatizing language (e.g., average student)
- ▶ Opposite of the "victim identity"
- ▶ Fosters hope
- ▶ Emphasizes the positive building blocks that already exist in a child



Strength-based is NOT the norm

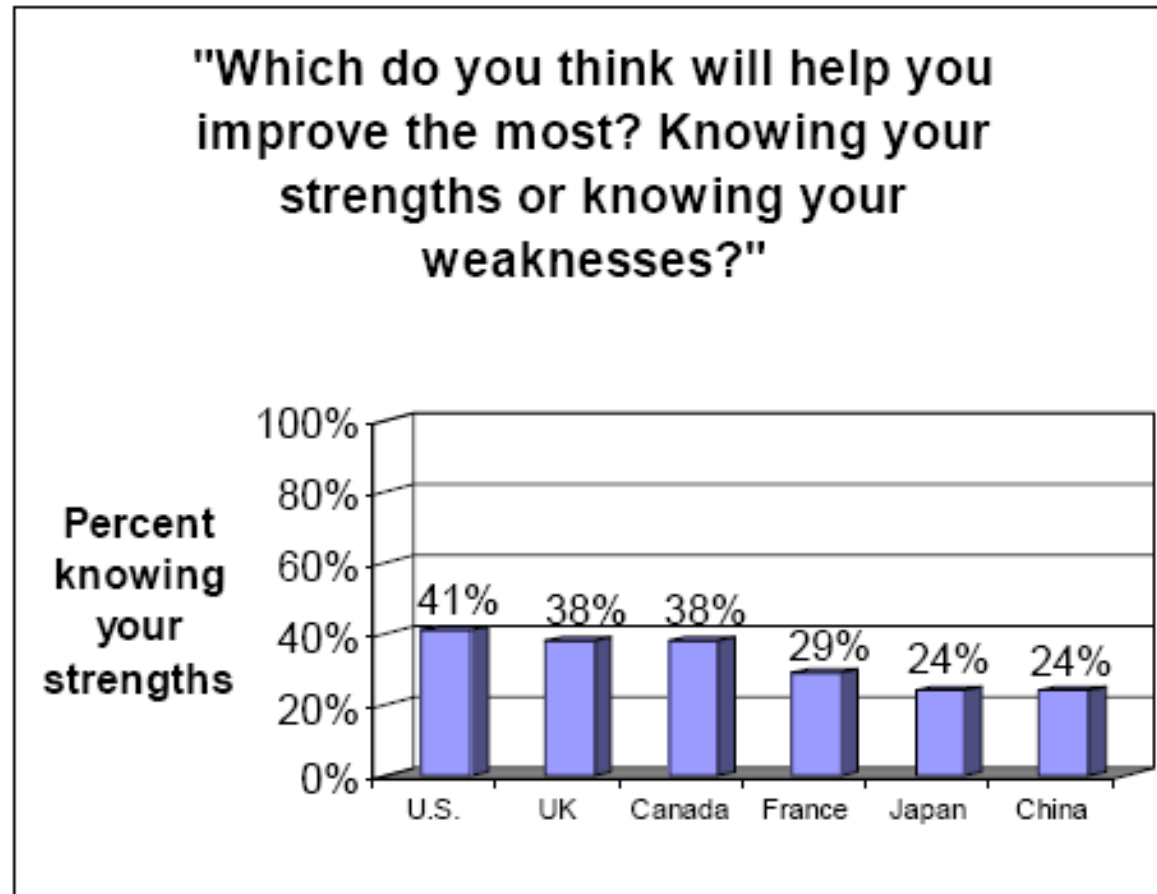


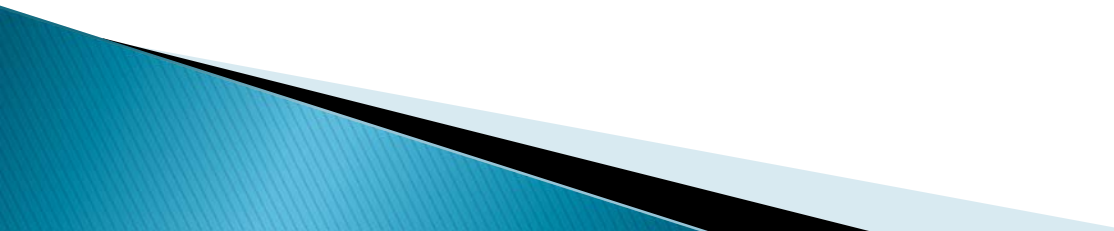
Figure 1. Results of a global Gallup Poll show that people think focusing on weaknesses will help them improve more than focusing on strengths.

The Seven Special Strengths

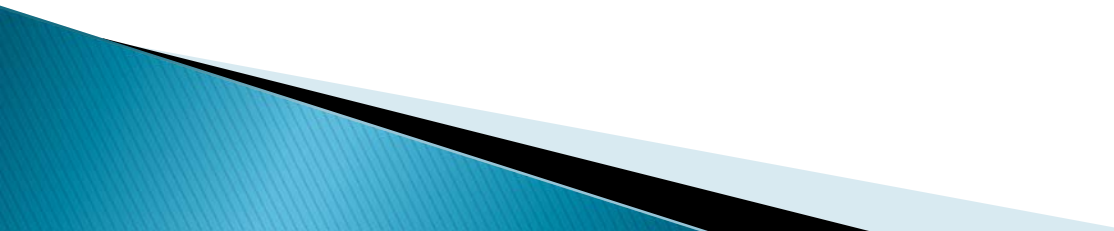
- 1. Diligence**
- 2. Goal orientation**
- 3. Internal motivation**
- 4. Perseverance**
- 5. Self-efficacy**
- 6. Resourcefulness**
- 7. Responsibility**



Diligence:

- ▶ 33% of high school seniors hardly ever open a book after school
 - ▶ U.S. students spent 70 percent less time studying than students in four of the five top-ranked countries. Japan tops.
 - ▶ Students who study too little learn too little
 - ▶ Features of school life and society are contributing to the erosion of academic effort
- 

Diligence: What Parents Can Do

- ▶ Do not push, inspire
 - ▶ Show the effect of academic success
 - ▶ Talk calmly and at appropriate times
 - ▶ When students feel that they are being expected to master some aspect of their learning, they tend to work harder
 - ▶ Societal factors and community factors
- 

Goal Orientation: Quotes

- ▶ If we are facing in the right direction, all we have to do is keep on walking.

~Buddhist Saying

- ▶ *I may not be there yet, but I'm closer than I was yesterday.*

~Author Unknown

- ▶ One may go a long way after one is tired.

~French Proverb

- ▶ *Our greatest glory is not in never failing, but in rising up every time we fail.*

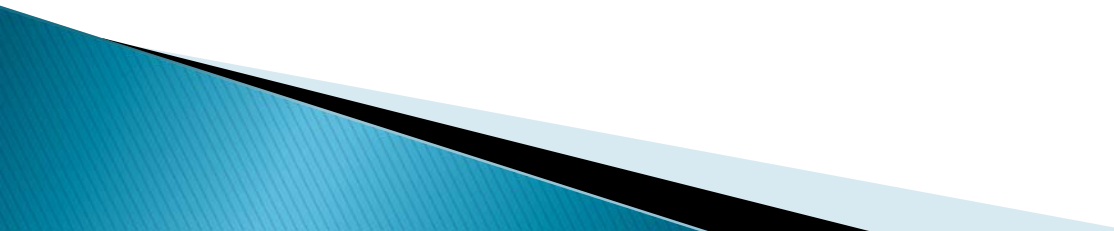
~Ralph Waldo Emerson



What Parents Can Do

- ▶ Help your children develop S.M.A.R.T. Goals
 - S = Specific
 - M = Measureable
 - A = Attainable
 - R = Realistic
 - T = Time-sensitive

SMART Goals: Attainable

- ▶ Attainable mean reachable
 - ▶ Goals that are reachable make the mind start working to help you get there
 - ▶ They spark others who hear about your goals as well
 - ▶ You develop the attitudes, abilities, skills, and financial capacity to reach them.
 - ▶ You begin to plan and the goals become even more attainable
- 

SMART Goals: Realistic

- ▶ Is the goal something that my child is both *willing* to pursue and *able* to attain?
- ▶ A goal can be both high and realistic
- ▶ It needs to come from your child, not you
- ▶ High goals that are desired encourage the necessary energy
- ▶ Low goals with no desire may not encourage ANY effort (i.e., take out the trash)
- ▶ To help your child believe in his or her ability to reach the goal, remind them of something THEY did in the past that was similar – then give them space.

Internal Motivation

- ▶ *What is being suggested here is that motivation not be seen as something existing solely in the student that he or she brings to the classroom and academic tasks; but rather as an outcome of meaningful participation in the classroom and the social practices that accomplish its everyday practical activities.*
 - Sharon Nelson–Le Gall

What motivates students?

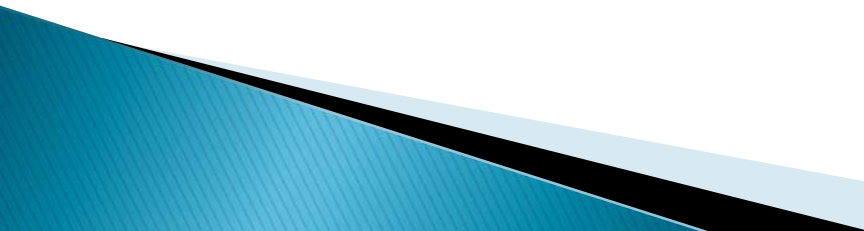
Cognitive Steps in Expectancy, Goal, and Equity Theory

Theory	Expectancy	Goal	Equity
Motivator	Anticipation of receiving a reward.	Intention of achieving the goal.	Achievement of equity or reduction of inequity.
Step 1	Can I do it?	What is the nature of the goal?	How much am I investing in the job?
Step 2	Will I be rewarded?	How committed am I to the goal?	To what extent am I satisfied and gratified by the work?
Step 3	Is the reward something I value?		Is an inequity present? Is my effort equal to the effort of others?

What Parents Can Do

- ▶ **Explain.** What to do or why they should do it.
- ▶ **Reward.** Rather than just criticizing bad grades, reward correct **behavior** and **answers**.
- ▶ **Care.** Be real with children and let them know if you are a bit confused by the project.
- ▶ **Encourage participation.** A lesson about nature, for example, would be more effective walking outdoors than looking at pictures.
- ▶ **Remember that energy sells.** “Hey, let’s do a few jumping jacks together before and after we do homework.” They will work to see you jump!

Perseverance

- ▶ A persistent inner drive and unshakable determination (Bernard, 2004).
 - ▶ An ability to endure in an undertaking in
 - ▶ Perseverance is commitment, hard work, patience, endurance – trying over and over again to success.
 - ▶ Often in the face of criticism and other's disbelief there is a doubt in who you are and in what you are capable of accomplishing.
 - ▶ Perseverance is a commitment, a dedication to yourself, and following through with your actions.
 - ▶ School success and college attainment comes only with perseverance
- 

Resourcefulness

- ▶ Ability to identify and use “external resources and surrogate sources of support”
 - ▶ “help-seeking”
 - ▶ resource utilization
 - ▶ ‘street smarts’
- ▶ Abused children who thrive as adults are able to “become adept at finding and engaging alternative sources of support” (Rubin, 1997, p. 8).
- ▶ Participants’ academic strategies:
 - Seeking advice about schoolwork
 - Obtaining tutors
 - Buying extra study resources
 - Becoming friends with high-performing youth

Resourcefulness: Quote

- ▶ *“I just wanted to get involved more with the smart kids....they only have straight A’s. If they can do it, I can do it. So I just started trying to be nice and we would get together after school. You know...before I would go to football practice, I would talk to them.*

What Parents Can Do

- ▶ **Help your child learn to ask himself or herself the following questions.**
 - Is there another way to get what I want?
 - Is the desired result really the best result?
 - Who else has information that might help me?
 - What is something very similar to what I need that might also work?
 - Who is the expert in this area?
 - What is one more thing I can try?
 - What would someone I admire do in this same situation?

What Parents Can Do

- ▶ **Don't reinvent the wheel**
Look for a solution that someone else has already created. It might be a book, a software program, or someone's existing checklists or procedures.
- ▶ **Leverage your network**
Build and maintain a network of people you can call on for questions and support, and make sure you make yourself available to these same people when they need help from you.
- ▶ **Learn everything you can about how to find information**
Internet, library, bookstore, librarian!
- ▶ **Teach resourceful habits to your family and your team at work**
If your children want to know some information, teach them how to look it up themselves, and show them reference books other than just the dictionary.
- ▶ **Resourcefulness = Necessity + Creativity + Persistence**

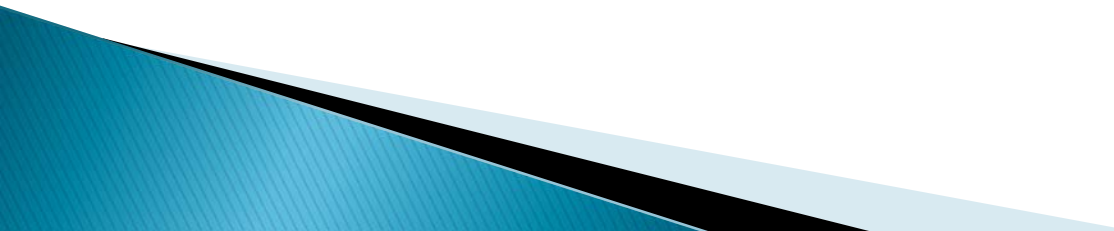
Responsibility

- ▶ “internal locus of control”
- ▶ “generalized sense of being in charge” of one’s own actions was “a key determinant of resilience”
- ▶ “The Toolbox Revisited: Paths to Degree Completion from High School Through College”
- ▶ “first party intervention”
 - ▶ “the commitment of time and effort likely to yield the return of earning a degree” (Adelman, 2006, p. 80).


Responsibility

- ▶ *“If I failed anything, If I didn’t do well, it’s because I didn’t put in the effort. I just didn’t do it” – Andrew*

What Parents Can Do

- ▶ • Create an Environment Where Responsibility Is The Norm
 - ▶ • Modeling Responsibility
 - ▶ • Teach Responsibility Early
 - ▶ • Expect Responsibility
 - ▶ • Expect responsible behavior at all times
 - ▶ • Reinforce Responsibility When You See it
 - ▶ • Stop Irresponsibility Before it Becomes Habit
- 

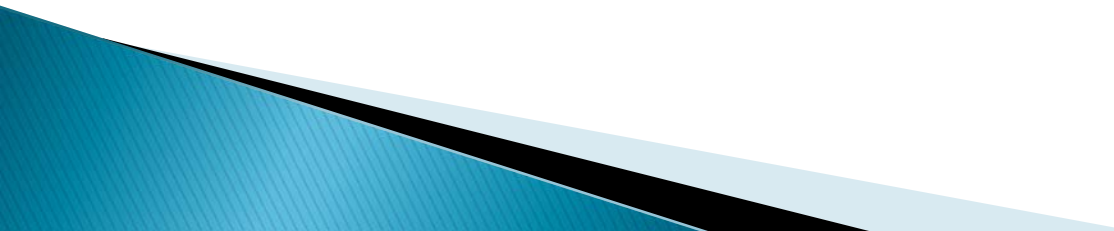
Self-efficacy

- ▶ What young people believe about their academic abilities plays an important role in their educational attainment (Bempechat, 1998).
 - ▶ A person who is efficacious believes he or she can “control the events that affect their lives...to realize desired futures and to forestall undesired ones” (Bandura, 1997, p. 1).
 - ▶ Individuals who demonstrate self-efficacy, especially during the transition from adolescence, are more likely to do well academically.
- 

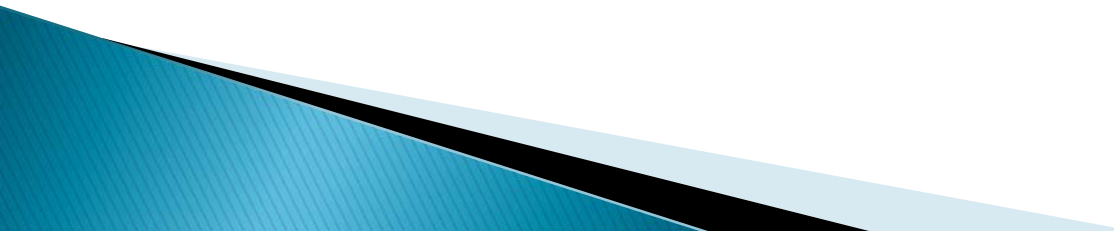
- ▶ *“I was able to do it. Everybody’s able to do it. Even if you are in ESE classes you can do it as long as you apply yourself. And I know that.”*

– Virginia

What Parents Can Do

- ▶ (1) clarifying vague assignments and assisting with the accomplishment of difficult tasks,
 - ▶ (2) recognizing students needs and using them to raise the payoff for successful performance, and
 - ▶ (3) insuring that the allocation of rewards is contingent on the successful accomplishment of the goal or task will induce effort
- 

In Conclusion

- ▶ Now YOU know what Successful KNOW, DO, and ARE
 - ▶ Your challenge?
 - ▶ Help the children and youth YOU KNOW to KNOW, DO, and BE – so they can Become
 - ▶ Successful Students!
 - ▶ Thank you for your time.
- 

Questions and Answers

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