



Wellness Today For Teachers

Setting Goals and Mental Health

Setting goals affects your mental health in one way or another.

Positive

- Give you a dopamine boost. Accomplishing goals makes you feel good.
- Can increase overall performance.
- Can increase overall self-esteem and satisfaction with life.
- Give you valuable experience.

Negative

- Can cause feelings of depression or anxiety.
- Can cause feelings of failure or low self-worth.

An important different between the two is how the goal is made and carried out. To help ensure goal-setting has a positive impact on mental health, be sure you and your students set SMART goals for the new year. Goals should be:

Specific
Measurable
Attainable
Relevant
Time-bound

Tips for Helping Students Set Goals Despite Covid-19

Setting goals may sound like a useless endeavor during the Covid-19 pandemic. Most people are working overtime just to survive and do the basics.

However, goal-setting during a pandemic is still possible! As your students work on setting their own goals for the coming year, they may need some help knowing the best way to proceed. Here are some tips you can use to help them (and you) set goals.

Goal-Setting Tips

• Set little goals each day.

When life seems overwhelming, sometimes setting and accomplishing small goals improves your mental health. These goals can be simple, like "Get out of bed by 7" or "Run once around the block."

• Break down your goals.

No matter the size of the goal, breaking it down into smaller, manageable steps will give you a more likely chance for success.

• **Pick just one or two bigger goals for the year** instead of trying to do everything you want.

• **Be flexible.** If the year 2020 has taught us nothing else, it's that plans change. Go into the year knowing that it's ok to change course in your goals or to change your goals altogether. Adapting to changes will increase your resilience, which is important for good mental health.

• Set a routine or schedule.

Prioritize and make a list of what you really need to get done and when you're going to do it. Be sure to include time for relaxation.

• Involve others in your goal.

You will be more likely to succeed if you have someone who you can talk to about your goal and who can support and motivate you.

• **Accept that you may not be as productive during the pandemic,** and that's ok. Do your best and don't put yourself down for not doing as much as you usually do.