

School Psychologists: Helping Students to Strive. Grow. Thrive!

Did you know that November 10-14, 2014 is School Psychology Awareness Week (SPAW)? The focus of SPAW this year is: *Engaging students at all levels of development to meet challenges, build new skills, and become thriving members of a thriving school community*, and the theme is: **Strive. Grow. Thrive!**

While we challenge ourselves as school psychologists to encourage all children to focus on their interests, challenge themselves with new things, and learn positive prosocial behaviors, we also challenge all of our students' families to help them to **Strive. Grow. Thrive!** Below are ways that you can work with your child to foster their overall social-emotional wellbeing, challenge them to take on new activities, learn new skills, and feel protected, respected, and valued. As parents, you can:

- Encourage your child to set goals and to map out a plan for achieving.
- Help your child internalize a sense that he/she can achieve by reinforcing the skills already developed and encouraging him/her to try new challenges.
- Emphasize that learning and growing requires trying new things and that success comes from small steps to a long-term goal.
- Help him/her work through setbacks or lack of self-confidence by helping him/her identify negative thoughts that may suggest concerns about his/her ability to be successful. As a parent, you can help him/her see what the small steps are and how persisting and overcoming obstacles is a part of succeeding.
- Praise attempts as well as success and make sure that you focus on the effort put into the success.
- Create an environment at home that allows your child to explore building (blocks, helping with projects, and more) drawing (crayons, finger paints, paper) and music (on the radio, with children's instruments, or through formal training).
- Demonstrate through your own behaviors how to try new challenging activities in sports, the arts, or school subjects and use problem solving and decision making skills by thinking aloud.
- Model the joy of learning by reading about a variety of topics with your children and let them know that you, too, are learning new things.
- Model perseverance and problem solving when faced with challenges or difficulties.

- Help your child develop positive relationships with peers and adults and model respectful, caring behaviors with others.