

## 6 Strategies to Motivate a Reluctant Learner

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If you're a parent of more than one child, you know that each kid is different. Just like adults, each individual child is unique in temperament, abilities, and motivation. Some kids have more needs than others, and some kids learn faster than others. Some are more responsible, and some are more caring. As humans, it's natural to have these differences, and it's important to stress to kids that our uniqueness is what makes us special.

Even so, you might be wondering what to do if your child just seems naturally... aloof. Most young children have a natural curiosity about the world around them, but sometimes after they start school, this engagement and wonderment of learning wanes. If this happens to your child, it's vital to turn this this around well before adolescence. If you're looking for ways to engage an indifferent learner, keep reading to discover specific strategies geared at motivating reluctant learners.

### Discover their passion... and use it



Even if your child is a reluctant learner, chances are there is something in this world he or she is passionate about. Does your child love video games? Maybe your child loves a specific sport, animal, character, show, movie, or virtually anything your child takes an interest in. Whatever it is, hone in on their interests and harness it to your advantage.

If there's any way to take that interest and leverage it to teach your child a goal you have in mind, it can make learning more palatable. For example, if your child loves video games, find games or apps that are like your child's favorite games, that have a learning goal you're aiming for. You might notice that your child loves the new game, too, and [establish good study habits from an early age](#) right away.

## Offer choices



Kids feel like they're in more control if they get to make a choice between different options offered to them. Everyone must engage in activities they don't like from time to time, but having a choice about what that activity is makes it better.

Further, if you offer a choice that includes something of interest to your child - a [new back-to-school app](#), video game or printable worksheet. This will only enhance your child's motivation to complete the task.



## Don't forget about boundaries and limits



Kids need boundaries to teach them that there are limits in life. Even if your child is allowed a choice, and use their passions to meet learning objectives, there must be some limits in place.

For example, if your child is playing one educational video game for hours at a time, it's likely that your child isn't getting much out of it after a certain point. Kids need a variety of activities and learning experiences, and enforcing boundaries will help them limit their activities and find new passions.

## Drop the rewards



Reward systems can be tempting. If you've grown up receiving an allowance from your parents, you might think that this is a worthwhile strategy to motivate kids. You might be surprised to learn that one secret of how to engage reluctant learners lies in the notion of intrinsic motivation. Giving child an external reward, like money or a special treat, is extrinsic motivation. Rewards do not help kids develop a love of learning, or to discover their passions. Kids need to want to learn.

This can only be done through intrinsic motivation. If you're wondering [how to foster intrinsic motivation](#), the answer is not as straight forward as you'd probably like to it to be. But by following the above advice in offering choices, and harnessing your child's interests, your child can find a path towards learning when given the freedom to explore what they love.

## Blame the behavior, not the child



Some frustrated parents resort to fear and punishment when they are unsuccessful at inspiring their kids. This is understandable, because as parents, we all want our children to be successful, and none of us want to watch our children sabotage themselves through their actions. To avoid this, make sure any conversations with your child about their behavior remains focused on just that: their behavior.

Never attempt to make a child feel bad about themselves because of their lack of motivation. Keep self-esteem out of the mix, and be sure to let your child know that you believe in them.

## Goal setting

Lastly, goal setting can help a child who feels overwhelmed and unmotivated. By chunking learning objectives into small, attainable steps can help a child feel more comfortable about working towards reaching that goal. In the process, your child will gain a sense of self-efficacy, which is one building block towards developing intrinsic motivation. If your child feels confident in what they're setting out to do, chances are, motivation to do it will go up.

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Trying to engage the unengaged can be tough. Frustration can set in, setting up a vicious cycle that can last for years to come. By taking a step back and working out a positive strategy early on can make a world of difference in your child's motivation to learn. You know your child best; use the above strategies how you see fit, and help your child rise above indifference to realize his or her fullest potential!

