

# **Understanding Motivation**



A project of the Family Involvement Committee of the Pennsylvania Council of Chief Juvenile Probation Officers and the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission

Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy

Family Name: \_\_\_\_

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### **INTRODUCTION**

As caregivers, we want what is best for our kids. We want them to be happy and meet their goals. When our child does not display an interest in working toward goals that will help them be successful, we get worried. We say things like: "Will they ever get their act together?""All they do is sit around all day and hang out with friends," and "Nothing that I care about—quality family time, a good education and job, taking care of responsibilities—moves them at all." This workbook looks at motivation (or drive) from a caregiver and youth point of view and provides tips on how to help nudge our loved one toward positive action.

It is not true that motivation is a static condition in a person. It is also not true that one cannot influence motivation. While each person ultimately will decide if they choose to take action, we can plant the seeds and nurture the soil so that growth occurs.



**Goal** To create a home environment where youth are self-motivated to work toward their goals and be successful.

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#### Introduction



### UNDERSTANDING MOTIVATION SURVEY (PRE-ASSESSMENT)

#### For each statement, circle the number that best describes your experience.

A.	l/we are satisfied with my/our child's motivation in important areas of their life				
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
	1	2	3	4	5
В.	When my/our c expectations ar		vation in areas that	are important t	to me/us, my/our
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
	1	2	3	4	5
C.	When my/our c	hild lacks moti	vation, I/we unders	tand the reasor	is why
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
	1	2	3	4	5
D.	When my/our c motivated	hild is unmotiv	vated, I/we know wł	nat to do in orde	er to get them
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
	1	2	3	4	5
E.	The strategies l	/we use to imp	orove my/our child's	motivation are	effective
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
	1	2	3	4	5

Parenting Workbook	Unders	tanding Motivation
	<b>QUICK TI</b>	PS CARDS
Preparation: Intends to take action Action: Practices the desired behavior Maintenance: Works to sustain the behavior change	<b>Stages of Change</b> <b>Precontemplation:</b> Unaware of the problem <b>Contemplation:</b> Aware of the problem and of the desired behavior change	Sources of Drive Values: Things that we do because they are the right thing to do Goals: Things that we do or achieve that make us proud Rewards/Consequences: Things that make us feel good/bad
<b>So important that it is not negotiable:</b> Examples - stay sober until legal age or solve problems without violence	Three Types of Expectations Important to me but not crucial: Examples - clean the room or dress better/differently Important to my child's success: Examples -	<ul> <li>Seven Strategies</li> <li>Help my child articulate goals</li> <li>Talk openly about values</li> <li>Help my child identify rewards for their behavior</li> <li>Help my child figure out what is important to them</li> <li>Help improve my child's confidence</li> <li>Apply consequences that my child wants to avoid</li> <li>Expose my child to activities that might help them find something they are passionate about</li> </ul>

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# Understanding Motivation

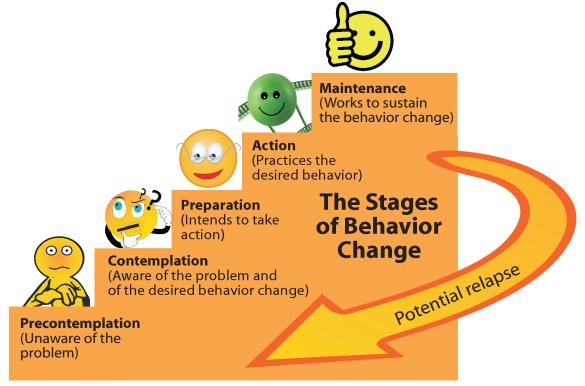


Parenting Workbook

### **Part A: Stages of Change**

One of the most helpful ways to think about those times when youth appear to lack motivation is to use the concept of "stages of change." This concept was developed by two researchers (James Prochaska and Carlo DiClemente) in the late 1970s. They determined that people make changes in their lives when they are ready to do so, and that **change does not happen quickly**. Instead, change occurs incrementally through various stages. Expecting quick change is not realistic.

Prochaska and DiClemente identified five stages of change:



**Precontemplation:** The individual doesn't believe they need to change, does not want to change, or is not confident that they can change.

**Contemplation:** The individual has some awareness about the need for change but is on the fence as to whether they want to make the effort to change.

**Preparation:** The individual has made a decision to change and is preparing to make that change happen.

Action: The individual has started to take steps toward change.

**Maintenance:** The individual has made the change and is now maintaining that change.

#### Part A: Stages of Change



Your child may have participated in an interview that assessed their risk factors. Working on these factors is important to your child's success, which is why they are included in your child's case plan. Motivation to work on these factors is also important. Your child may be at different stages of change for each risk factor. For example, they may be in the action stage of change when it comes to working on family conflict or coping skills and in the precontemplation stage when it comes to working on peer relationships.

Review the diagram below. These are things that youth sometimes do not appear motivated to do or do well. Circle the areas that you want your child to change but that they are not motivated to change. If there are areas they are not motivated to change that are not in the diagram, write them under "Other."



In Column A, list four areas where your child is changing or where you would like them to change but they are not motivated to do so. Indicate what stage of change they are in for each area (Column B) and your level of satisfaction (Column C).

<b>Column A:</b> Areas my child is changing or that I would like them to change but they are not	<b>Column B:</b> The stage of change my child is in for this area (circle one)	<b>Column C:</b> Level of satisfaction regarding my child's stage of change in this area (circle one)
1.	Precontemplation Contemplation Preparation Action Maintenance	1 2 3 4 5 Very Neither Very satisfied nor unsatisfied unsatisfied
2.	Precontemplation Contemplation Preparation Action Maintenance	1 2 3 4 5 Very Neither Very satisfied satisfied nor unsatisfied unsatisfied
3.	Precontemplation Contemplation Preparation Action Maintenance	1 2 3 4 5 Very Neither Very satisfied satisfied nor unsatisfied unsatisfied
4.	Precontemplation Contemplation Preparation Action Maintenance	1 2 3 4 5 Very Neither Very satisfied nor unsatisfied unsatisfied

Answer these questions for those areas with which you are unsatisfied:

1. What are the reasons you are unsatisfied with your child's motivation in these areas?

2. What do you think are the reasons your child is not motivated in these areas?



Sometimes we don't really understand how our child feels about those areas that frustrate us. Sometimes, when we try to understand, we end up arguing more than discussing. Check your understanding of your child's views on the above areas by asking. Show your child the stages of change diagram and ask them to identify what stage of change they think they are in for one or more of the four areas you identified. Be careful to do this exercise without judgment. Just try to get honest answers to your questions. When you are done, ask your child what you can to do help them move to the next stage of change.

Before doing the assignment, have your child's case manager demonstrate how to introduce the conversation about one of the four areas you selected. After the demonstration, practice how you would introduce the conversation with your child either with the case manager or by yourself in front of a mirror.

Write down the results of your conversation with your child below.

Change area	What stage of change are they in?	What is the reason they are in this stage?
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		

Choose one of the areas above and write down 1-2 ways you can help your child move to the next stage of change:

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## Understanding Motivation



**Assignment Review:** Write down any observations about your discussion with your child regarding their stage of change for the four areas in part A.

1. What did I learn in talking with my child about their stage of change in the four areas?

2. How did my child respond to our discussion about the stages of change?

### **Part B: Sources of Drive**



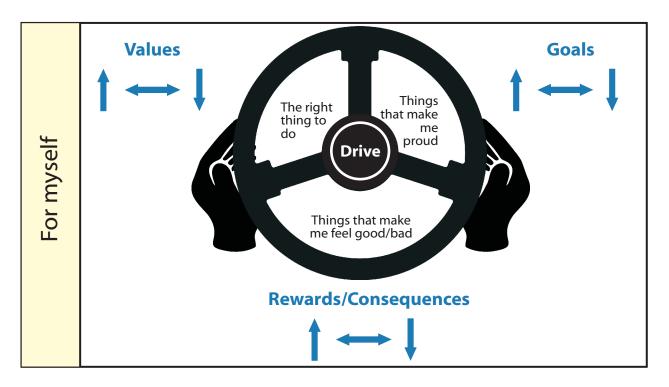
A great deal has been written about motivation. One research finding is that many of us change when we are forced to change, for example, when someone arrested for drug possession is required to go to treatment because of a court order.

For others, change occurs when the rewards for changing are greater than the costs of not changing. An example of this is when a person starts eating healthier foods because they can no longer tolerate feeling sluggish because of their poor diet. Some of us are not willing to pay high costs before we decide to change, while others seem to have a high tolerance for pain before changing. The bottom line is that we all have our own "buttons" which, when pushed, lead us to change. Everyone is motivated by something.

**Finding the Hook.** Below are three of the primary reasons we are driven to do things. These reasons can be our "hook," or the main driver that pushes us to act. The three primary reasons can overlap. For example, paying off a loan may be driven by a personal value (if you borrow money, you should pay it back), a goal (by paying it off, you can reach your goal of being debt free), or a reward/consequence (if you don't make payments, you pay interest and penalties). However, most of us act a certain way because one of these three reasons is the primary driver.

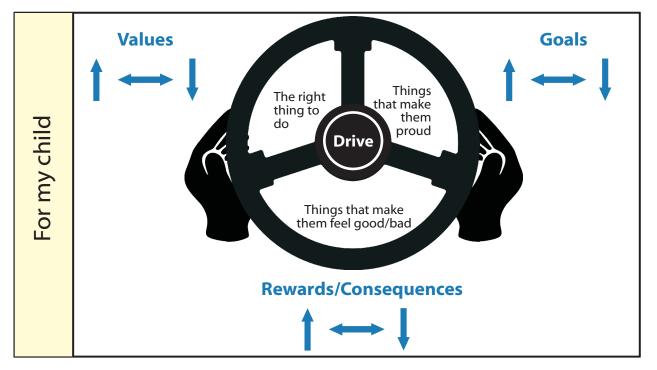
What Drives Us	Examples
1. Values (things that we do because they are the right thing to do)	<ul> <li>Pay off debts</li> <li>Don't litter</li> <li>Take care of family members</li> <li>Volunteer at a homeless shelter</li> <li>Be loyal to friends</li> <li>Treat all people respectfully</li> <li>Attend a spiritual center</li> <li>Return a lost wallet</li> <li>Tell the truth</li> </ul>
2. Goals (things that we do or achieve that make us proud)	<ul> <li>Get our own apartment or house</li> <li>Get a job promotion</li> <li>Learn how to play an instrument or join a band</li> <li>Join a summer softball league</li> <li>Work at an animal shelter</li> <li>Go to college</li> <li>Save money</li> <li>Learn a vocational skill</li> <li>Get a GED</li> </ul>
3. Rewards/Consequences (things that make us feel good/bad)	<ul> <li>Drive the speed limit</li> <li>Get and keep a job</li> <li>Avoid walking home alone at night</li> <li>Go to parties with friends</li> <li>Play video games</li> <li>Avoid going to a dance when feeling awkward</li> <li>Hang out with peers</li> <li>Dress a certain way</li> <li>Exercise or eat healthy</li> <li>Plant vegetables or flowers</li> </ul>

Start by thinking about what drives you. Circle the up arrow if "Values" is an area that is a major driver for your actions, a down arrow if it is not, and a sideways arrow if you are neutral about it. Do the same with "Goals" and "Rewards/Consequences."



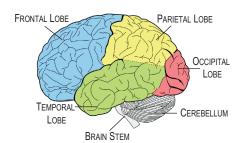
	For each upward arrow you circled, list one or two examples of why you think this is a driver for you. If you did not circle an upward arrow, do not write anything.
Values	1.
values	2.
	1.
Goals	2.
	1.
Rewards/ Consequences	2.

Let's find your child's "hook"—an area that, if activated, might help them move from precontemplation or contemplation to action. In the same way you did for yourself, think about what drives your child's behavior. Circle the up arrow if "Values" is an area that is a major driver for their actions, a down arrow if it is not, and a sideways arrow if they are neutral about it. Do the same with "Goals" and "Rewards/Consequences."



	For each upward arrow you circled, list one or two examples of why you think this is a driver for your child. If you did not circle an upward arrow, do not write anything.
Values	1.
values	2.
	1.
Goals	2.
	1.
Rewards/ Consequences	2.

# Parenting Workbook



## Understanding Motivation

**Brain Development.** Adolescent behavior, including motivation, is impacted by a youth's stage of brain development. Regions of the brain, such as the frontal lobe, where reasoning occurs, are not as developed as the same regions in adults. This can affect a youth's willingness to put forth an effort in the present for a benefit in the future.

Adolescents are preparing for independence, which means that they may not be motivated to comply with

**Questioning Authority** 

conventional rules. This can lead to difficult conversations with their caregivers about the reasons why they do not want to follow the expectations of those in authority.

Furthermore, adolescent brains are impacted by "ramped up" hormones, resulting in difficulty controlling their emotions. The pleasure center of the brain, where rewards are felt, is more stimulated, which means that youth are motivated by those things that bring pleasure. Part of that is their social life. Youth tend to be motivated by—even fixated on—their social life, and many of their actions can be traced back to this interest.

	Social Media Heightened Sensitivity	
bu	Consider how the description of brain development above explains the areas that do and do not motivate your child.	
Thrill Seeking	1. How does the brain development information confirm what is true about your child's current motivation? (For example, you may say that your child is primarily motivated by peers or that your child does not seem to be motivated by the need to follow rules.)	Gaming
Need for Stimulus	2. How might this impact how you approach your child about an area where you want to see greater effort? (For example, you might loosen the rules around curfew, which impacts both your child's independence and the time they spend with peers, if your child complies with something that is important for their success, such as attending school or getting good grades.)	<b>Pushing Boundaries</b>

Part B: Sources of Drive

**Peer Approval** 





Over the next week or two, keep a log of times when your child shows initiative and when they do not. Circle what you think is the motivation for their decision to take action or not to take action. You may not be sure, but do your best based on your knowledge of your child.

#### **Times youth showed initiative:**

Behavior:			
Motivator (circle one):	Values	Goals	Rewards/Consequences
<ul> <li>How did this motivator help di</li> </ul>	rive your you	th?	
Behavior:			
Motivator (circle one):	Values	Goals	Rewards/Consequences
<ul> <li>How did this motivator help di</li> </ul>	rive your you	th?	
Behavior:			
Motivator area (circle one)	: Values	Goals	Rewards/Consequences
<ul> <li>How did this motivator help di</li> </ul>	rive your you	th?	
Behavior:			
Motivator area (circle one)	: Values	Goals	Rewards/Consequences
<ul> <li>How did this motivator help di</li> </ul>	rive your you	th?	





#### Times youth did NOT show initiative:

Behavior:

• Explain what happened:

Behavior:

• Explain what happened:

Behavior:

• Explain what happened:

**Behavior:** 

• Explain what happened:

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# Understanding Motivation



**Assignment Review:** Document what you discovered after observing your child's level of motivation for the past week or two.

1. Which areas (values, goals, rewards/consequences) were most influential when your child demonstrated motivation and drive?

2. How important (very, somewhat, not at all) was it for you that your child showed motivation and drive in these areas? Why?



### Part C: Dealing with Our Expectations

It can be aggravating when our child does not seem to care about, or take action on, areas that are important to us. Adolescent behavior can appear self-centered, apathetic, or even contrary to the values that youth were taught. However, as we saw in the section on brain development, many of these behaviors should be expected. Expecting these behaviors is not the same as tolerating them.

As caregivers, it is our responsibility to teach our children when their behavior-or lack of behavior-is problematic. We model what it means to have a work ethic, we talk about and show how to be respectful to others, and we confront or redirect attitudes and behaviors that contradict the things we value. However, sometimes our expectations may not be realistic given our child's development stage.

List as many things as you can think of that you wish your child would do. They could be things that your child is not doing now or things that you want them to start doing differently.

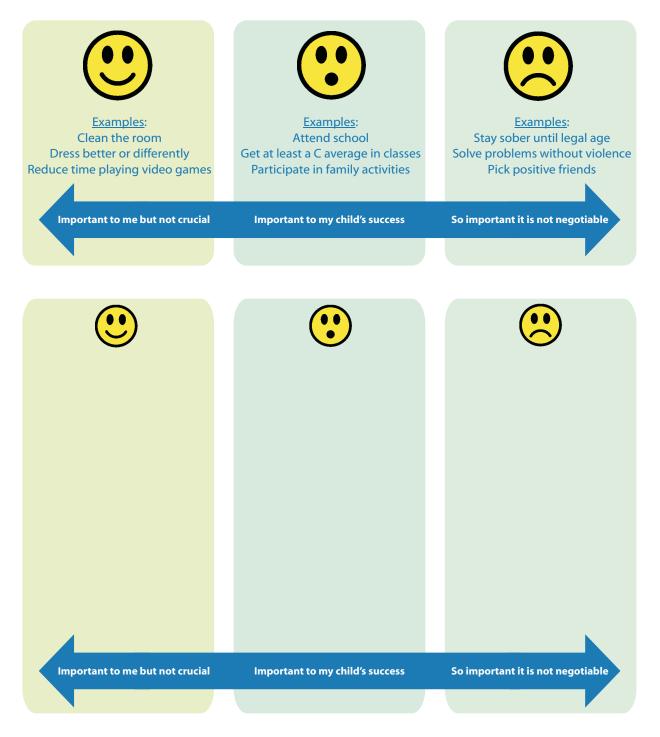
1.	8.	15.
2.	9.	16.
3.	10.	17.
4.	11.	18.
5.	12.	19.
6.	13.	20.
7.	14.	21.

Now, move those items into one of three categories in the chart on the next page:

1. **Important to me but not crucial.** These are behaviors you want your child to start doing or do differently. They are behaviors that are important to you but that are not really crucial to your child's long-term success.

2. Important to my child's success. These are behaviors that lead to success. If your child is going to be happy and live independently, these things are important to do.

3. So important that it is not negotiable. These are behaviors that, if not acted on, can lead to harm for your child or others. As such, they are not negotiable and could result in significant, negative life changes if not addressed.



Sometimes we get aggravated when our child does not show motivation in areas that are important to us but not crucial for their success. When this happens, we have to be careful about pushing our child too much. This is especially important when we consider the fact that change takes effort.

#### **Part C: Dealing with Our Expectations**

According to the best-selling authors Chip and Dan Heath in their book Switch: How to Change Things When Change Is Hard, research shows that "the bigger the change" you're suggesting, the more it will sap people's self-control," and self-control is an "exhaustible resource." That makes change difficult. Furthermore, they point out, "So, when you hear people say that change is hard because people are lazy or resistant, that's just flat wrong. In fact, the opposite is true: change is hard because people wear themselves out."

- 1. List a time when you attempted to change something and the effort exhausted you.
- 2. Name one or two areas of change that may be exhausting for your child.

The research suggests that since change can be difficult for youth, as well as for adults, we have to be careful about how many things we ask our youth to change at once. In other words, we must "pick our battles." Many of us have learned this lesson after making too many New Year's resolutions only to find ourselves sticking to just one or two, if that many!



Think about your list of things you want your child to do or do differently—in particular, the things that are important to their success or so important that they are non-negotiable. Then, think about the research that says that self-control is an exhaustible resource and that change is difficult. Pick no more than two items from the list to discuss with your child at a future date. List them below and be prepared to discuss these with your child's case manager.

1.

2.



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Assignment Review: Discuss with your child's case manager the two areas that you most want your child to change (areas that are important to their success or so important that they are nonnegotiable). Explain the reasons you selected those areas.

1. The first area I am hoping my child will change is \_\_\_\_\_

The reason I chose this area is \_\_\_\_\_

2. The second area I am hoping my child will change is \_\_\_\_\_

The reason I chose this area is \_\_\_\_\_

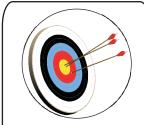


#### **Part D: Strategies to Increase Motivation**

A coach works with a team of athletes, each with different levels of talent and drive. Talent alone will not necessarily result in winning. The players must be motivated to use and improve their talent for maximum effect. Players with drive—a "fire in the belly"—are more likely to exert the kind of effort necessary to compete. An effective coach, then, must know how to motivate each player, no matter how talented. No one method will work for every player.

In the same way, our youth have strengths and varying levels of drive, depending on the subject. Like a coach, as caregivers, we must know how to motivate our child in those areas that are important to their success or so important that they are non-negotiable. This part of the workbook will discuss strategies to have a conversation with your child about these areas.

Below are seven strategies you might consider to help motivate your child to act in a manner that is good for them. Each strategy is tied to one of the primary reasons we are driven to do things.



Help them articulate their goals. Sometimes youth haven't settled on a goal for their life. Depending on their age, having a goal may not appear to be important to them. What is important is that they wake up every day with something to strive for: making the basketball team, finding a job, learning how to fix cars, and so on.



Talk openly about values. When you help a neighbor clean up their property after vandalism, talk to your child about

the importance of helping others, and explain that someday you could be in a similar position. When you act on your values and talk about them, your child is more likely to adopt those values. Don't keep them hidden.



Point out real or potential rewards for certain behavior. In some cases, you can be the source of the rewards. If spending time with friends is important to your child, reward your child's positive behavior by increasing their free time. In order for this to work, you have to know what rewards your child wants, not what rewards you want for them.



Look for ways to help your child verbalize what is important to them. Having your child articulate their opinion is much more meaningful than you giving your opinion. This way, they own what is important to them. In some cases, you have to look for signs of what is important and reinforce it. For example, when your child says they need to get to work but don't have a way to get there, you can say, "Work is very important to you. Let me help you get a ride."



Be sensitive to your child's level of confidence and look for ways to build it. Remember, we are less likely to do something if we are not confident we will be successful. Know your child well enough to know what areas they struggle with, and then point out their strengths in this area. For example, if your child has difficulty with reading but is able to follow visual instructions, like in a video game, point out their capability.



Similar to rewards, look for ways to reinforce real or potential negative consequences that you child will want to avoid. Adolescents often

don't think about the consequences of risky behavior; instead, they act impulsively and then deal with the penalties that come with that behavior. You can help your child by asking openended questions such as "What would happen if you did that?" You might discuss stories you see in the news about people

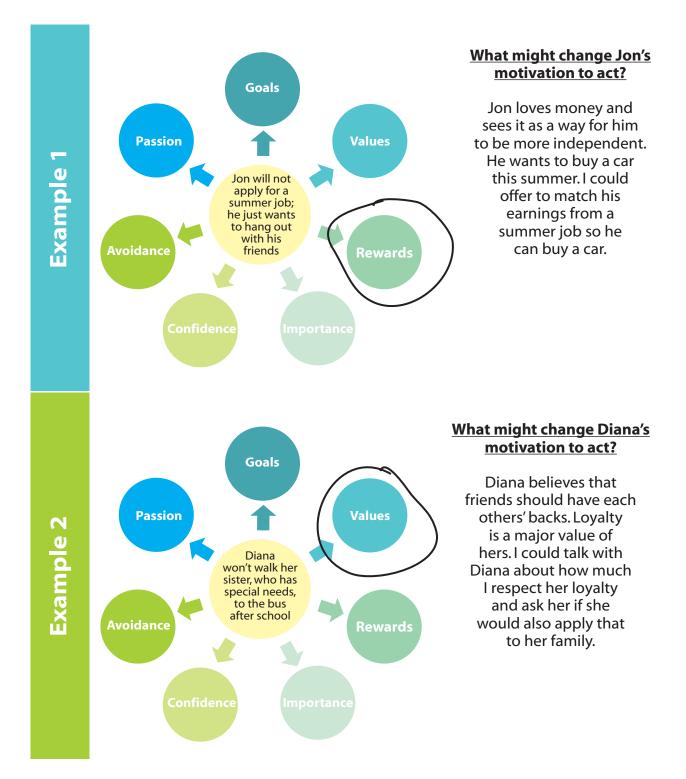
suffering consequences because of their negative behavior.

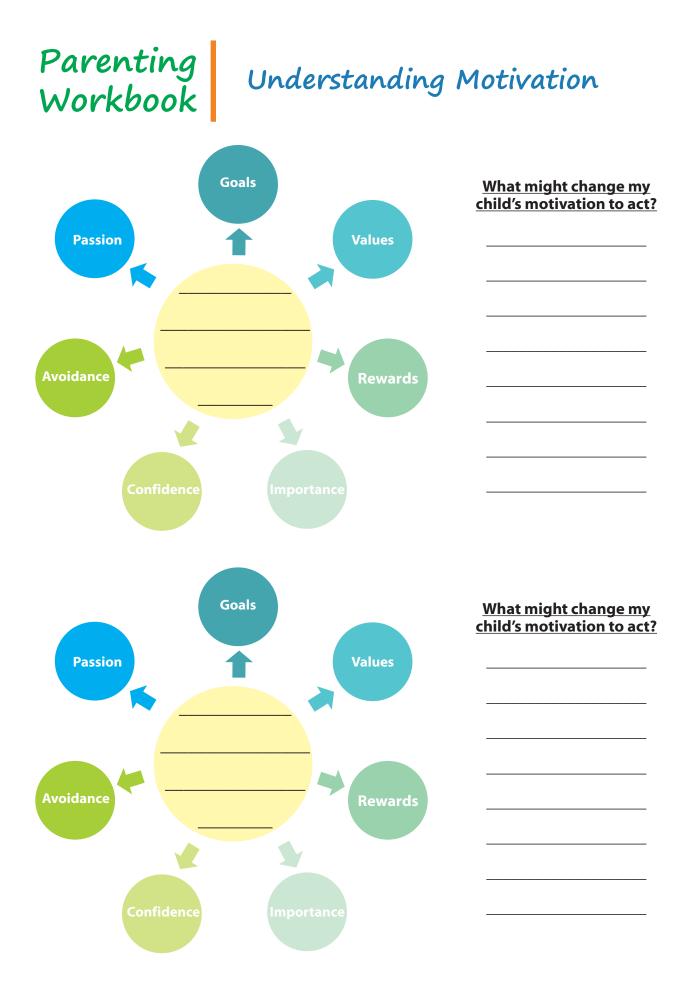


Help your child find their passion by exposing them to new experiences. You never know what will push their passion button, but the odds of it getting pushed are greater when they are exposed to

other people, events, and situations. Once their passion is discovered, a flood of emotion will usually follow, and with emotion will come energy and drive. This emotion will often fuel unbridled enthusiasm at first and then, over time, focused enthusiasm.

In the last activity (part C), you listed areas in which you wished your child would show some motivation. Pick two areas that are either important to their success or so important that they are not negotiable and choose one of the seven strategies listed here to help increase their motivation in those areas. Two examples are provided for you.





#### Part D: Strategies to Increase Motivation

Now that we have discussed the seven strategies, here are a few tips to help increase your child's drive. Circle your favorite tips and think about how you might use them. You will likely need to use different strategies and tips at different times, depending on the issue and your child's stage of change at the time.

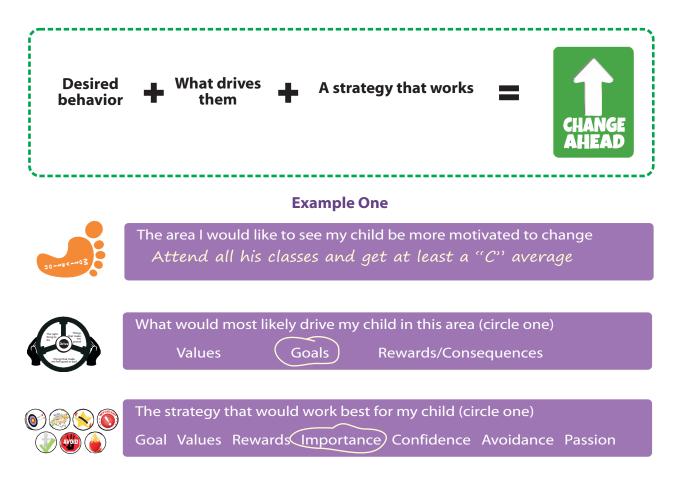
Tip	Example
Change the situation	Sometimes you can increase motivation by changing circumstances. For example, if you remove a video game from the house or limit its use, your child will not be tempted to spend all their free time gaming.
Tap into feelings	Feelings act as drivers and give us the energy to push forward. Look for ways to access the part of your child's brain that responds to feelings, such as appealing to their strong sense of justice, fairness, or loyalty.
Tip the scale	Sometimes youth are immobilized because they perceive that the reward for a behavior is not worth the effort. Look for ways to tip the scale. For example, extend curfew for good school attendance.
Increase positive peer influence	Since peer relations are so important to adolescents, find ways to strengthen those peer relations that support positive goals. For example, invite positive peers to family activities.
Encourage positive adult relationships	Foster positive adult relationships that are important to your child. For example, encourage your child to get involved in an extracurricular school activity led by a teacher your child respects.
Increase exposure	Increase your child's exposure to new experiences—ones that might tap into a passion. For example, take your child to an event that excites them (e.g., a basketball game, a play, a martial arts demonstration).
Be intentional	Talk openly about things that matter, such as respect, dignity, and other values. Don't be silent and assume that your child will "catch" values. For example, when watching a movie together, point out how much you admire a character who is selfless or who sacrifices for others.
Build confidence	Look for ways to build your child's confidence in the areas with which they struggle. Remind them of times they overcame their lack of confidence. For example, tell your child how proud you were of them when they asked for help, an area with which they have had difficulty in the past.
Limit the amount of change	Remember that the energy required to change behavior is an exhaustible resource. Pick your battles and don't overwhelm your child with too many demands.
Teach the value of failure	There is a difference between good and bad failure. Good failure is when we learn from the experience; bad failure is when we don't learn from the experience. Watch for opportunities to teach good failure. For example, say, "I should not text while I'm walking. That's how I fell off the curb and broke my ankle. I was not paying attention. That will not happen again."



## Understanding Motivation



Now, let's put it all together. Below are two examples of how to help increase a child's motivation. In the two examples, the caregiver chose an area they wanted their child to change. Then, they selected the driver that would most likely motivate their child and the strategy that they thought would work best for them. Review the examples and then complete the exercise for your child.

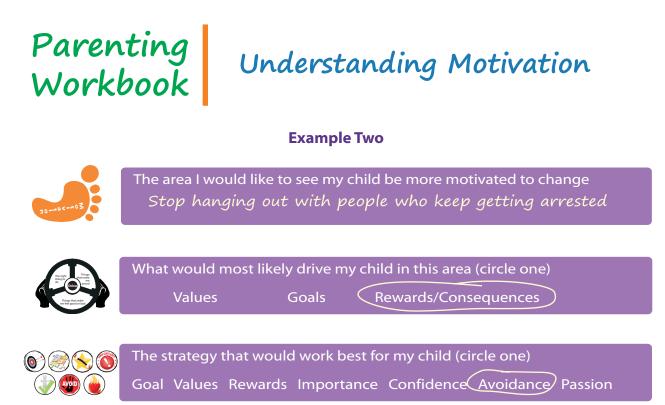


Describe your child's area in need of motivation: My son has been skipping classes. I know he is capable, but he just can't seem to do what he needs to do.

Describe what drives your child most right now: His main drive right now is to own his own car. That is why I picked "Goals."

Describe what strategy you selected and why: I picked "Importance" because owning his own car is all he talks about.

Describe your plan: I offered to help make monthly car payments if he attended classes and got at least a C average.



Describe your child's area in need of motivation: My son hangs out with people who get into trouble. I am afraid it is only a matter of time before he does something to get arrested. I would like him to get different friends.

Describe what drives your child most right now: His main drive right now is "Rewards." He gets a lot out of these friendships. They are loyal to each other.

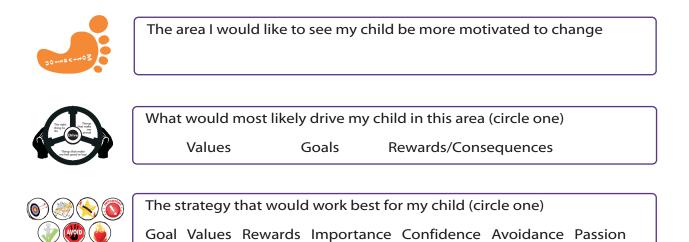
Describe what strategy you selected and why: I picked "Avoidance." I don't think anything I say or do is going to matter. But, if I can find a way to keep him away from them, it might help.

Describe your plan: I am going to get my child involved in activities that occupy his time, starting with a job. This will help him avoid those friends

Now, choose one area you would like to see your child change. Begin with an area where they are likely to have some success. You can choose a bigger challenge later, once they have had some practice working toward change.



Make a plan and then discuss it with your child. When you are satisfied with the results of the first plan, make a plan for a different area you would like your child to change. Remember not to do too much too quickly as change is an exhaustible resource.



Describe your child's area in need of motivation:

Describe what drives your child most right now:

Describe what strategy you selected and why:

Describe your plan:

Parenti Workbo	ng Understanding Motivation ok
50m->8m-05	The area I would like to see my child be more motivated to change
And the second s	What would most likely drive my child in this area (circle one)ValuesGoalsRewards/Consequences
	The strategy that would work best for my child (circle one) Goal Values Rewards Importance Confidence Avoidance Passion

Describe your child's area in need of motivation:

Describe what drives your child most right now:

Describe what strategy you selected and why:

Describe your plan:



### UNDERSTANDING MOTIVATION SURVEY (POST-ASSESSMENT)

#### For each statement, circle the number that best describes your experience.

Α.	I/we are satisfied with my/our child's motivation in important areas of their life				
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
	1	2	3	4	5
В.	When my/our child lacks motivation in areas that are important to me/us, my/our expectations are reasonable				
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
	1	2	3	4	5
C.	When my/our child lacks motivation, I/we understand the reasons why				
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
	1	2	3	4	5
D.	When my/our child is unmotivated, I/we know what to do in order to get them motivated				
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
	1	2	3	4	5
E.	The strategies I/we use to improve my/our child's motivation are effective				
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
	1	2	3	4	5

Comments:

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