

# THE IMPORTANCE OF BUILDING GRIT AND RESILIENCE

Working With The Strengths of Children With Autism

**In recent years, GRIT has become a buzzword in education. GRIT has been said to be the single most important trait a person needs to be successful**

However, it has also been said that the qualities needed for GRIT can also be challenges for people with autism

**At Autism New Zealand, we believe in recognising and utilising strengths. And, if we are adults who are flexible thinkers, we have the ability to make changes that make the qualities of GRIT more accessible to autistic kids.**

So let's think about some ways we help our kids build their GRIT!



## GRIT IS PASSION AND PERSEVERANCE FOR VERY LONG TERM GOALS

Which means that many children with autism already have gritty characteristics, especially in areas of special interest. Dedication to passion is a big part of GRIT



## HELP YOUR CHILD TO FIND PURPOSE

What is important to them? What do they want to achieve? Do they want to learn to drive? Do they want to learn an instrument? Do they want to become a programmer? How can we create a visual reminder of long term goals?



## TEACH CHILDREN ABOUT DIFFERENT BRAINS

Research has shown that children who learn about the brain and brain development are more likely to proceed when they fail. The G in GRIT stands for Grow Mindset, and while this may be tricky for less flexible thinkers, we can teach all children about all kinds of brains and thought processes



## MODEL FAILURE AND PERSEVERANCE

"People who succeed fail all the time - in fact they fail more than anyone else because a failure is an opportunity for information." -Angela Duckworth, author of GRIT: Passion and Perseverance  
Kids need to understand our failures and successes as adults



## KEEP A RECORD OF THE CHILD'S SUCCESSES

Every time the child does something positive, put it in a brag book or a proud book and make sure the child knows. Behaviour that is rewarded is more likely to be repeated, and when we build a child's self-esteem, amazing things unfold



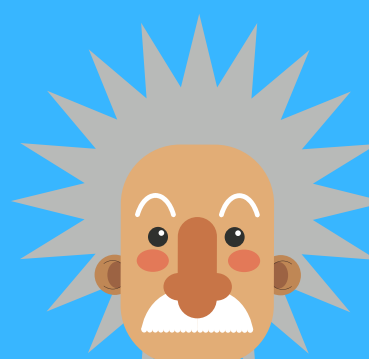
## WRITE IT DOWN

Stories can be used for more than self esteem - we can write about times kids worked hard and kept going and achieved something. Use stories to create positive memories of resilience, perseverance and growth



## MAKE INTERNAL PROCESSES EXTERNAL

Children with autism may not be aware that you're not vocalising your thoughts, including recognising disappointments and overcoming them. Make your internal monologue external - comment on both your frustrations and your successes



## SHARE STORIES OF FAMOUS PEOPLE WITH GRIT

Offer examples of successful people who persevered - J.K. Rowling, for example, or people with autism including Temple Grandin, Greta Thunberg and even Einstein!