

## Keeping failure in focus



To change your child's perception of failure, and to help them see failure for what it really is – feedback in wolf's clothing – it's important to keep failure in focus, by talking about it regularly. When we expose our fears to the light, we often find that they aren't as scary as they seem when they are left to roam around in the dark.

If you notice that your child has a fear of failure, or an aversion to failure, you may wish to run through the following activity with them. This should be done as a conversation, and they should not see the questions in advance.

You will notice that the first and last question in the list are the same. Do they answer the question the same when they answer it both times?

1. What does the word failure mean to you?
2. Think of a time when you failed at something. How did you feel?
3. What advice would you give to someone that has failed at something?
4. When have you been nervous about something, but you showed up anyway?
5. What do you think about mistakes?
6. Think of a time when you made a mistake. What did you do afterwards?
7. What would you say to someone who gives up after making a mistake?
8. What advice would you give to someone who gives up at something because they think they aren't good at it?
9. What advice would you give to someone who is worried about putting their hand up in case they get the answer wrong?
10. What advice would you give to someone who spells a word wrong and want to start all over again?
11. What does taking a risk, or 'having a go' mean?
12. Is there a time when you have given up, or not taken a risk to try something new. What happened?
13. Do you think you learn more from taking risks and trying new things, or from 'playing it safe' and doing only what you can already do?
14. What does the word failure mean to you?

*This activity was developed by David Cole. Used with permission, and thanks.*