

# Family Goal-Setting Activity

by Dawn Magee

According to the late author and motivational speaker Earl Nightingale, there is a great deal of difference between the most successful five percent of the population and the rest of the nation. One of the major differences is that the most successful five percent establish clear, positive and effective goals for themselves.

Some people are natural goal-setters. Fortunately for those who aren't, the skill can be learned. With your encouragement and training, your kids can become effective goal-setters and achievers.

## Objective

We don't achieve our goals on our own strength and ability alone. This activity is designed to show that it takes the whole family to help each person achieve their goals.

## Supplies

- A container to throw objects in (e.g., a box or wastebasket)
- Six small objects for throwing (e.g., tennis balls or bunches of crumpled paper)
- Masking tape
- A blindfold
- Something as a reward for success (e.g., candy or a small prize; one per family member)
- A scribbler or journal to write in
- A pen or pencil

## Instructions

The object of the game is for each family member to throw as many objects ("balls") into the container ("goal") as they can. There's a catch: everyone will be blindfolded and throwing backward!

- Choose an area of your home with plenty of open space and where nothing can get broken. Set the goal at one end of the play space and mark a line with masking tape about

four or five paces away. This is where the thrower will stand. (Smaller children can stand closer.)

- Assign each family member an “observer.” The observer will have a special job to do during their assigned family member’s turn. Try to have a different observer for each family member. (Smaller children may need assistance and can be exempt from this part if necessary.)
- After explaining the rules (below), let everyone know there are prizes to be handed out at the very end of the game. **Say nothing more about the prizes at this time**, but keep this in mind for yourself: *the prizes are not rewards for individual success*. Each family member will receive a prize at the end of the game, demonstrating that you win as a family when you work together.

## Rules

Choose who will go first. Then, take turns throwing according to the following rules:

1. Blindfold the thrower. Have them stand on the throwing line with their back to the goal.
2. The thrower takes their first throw with no assistance.
3. After the first throw, the rest of the family (except for the assigned observer) gathers around the thrower and offers *verbal assistance* to help them succeed at getting the ball in the goal.
  - **No physical assistance is allowed.** Nobody but the thrower is allowed to touch the balls and the goal cannot be moved.
4. During the thrower’s turn, the assigned observer will stand back and take note of the things that the family is saying to help the thrower achieve their goal.
  - It might be helpful to write down these observations since you will be sharing and discussing them later.
5. After six throws, move on to the next person’s turn.
6. After everyone has had a turn, anybody who has not yet scored a goal takes another turn. Continue until every family member has gotten at least one ball into the goal.

## Debrief

After the game, have each observer share what they saw. Discuss what worked and what didn't work in helping the thrower achieve their goal. Point out how much more effectively we achieve our goals when we help and support one another, sometimes offering words of correction but always cheering each other on.

Next, give out the prizes, one for each family member. Talk about winning as a family. Explain that when one person succeeds, we all do.

Finally, create a Family Goals Journal and ask each family member to share something that they want to achieve in the next year. Write down each person's goal along with their name and the date (be sure to leave some blank space after this). Then, ask each person how the rest of the family can help them achieve their goal. Write these ideas in the journal alongside each person's goal.