Success is a term that is often heard in reference to a career or school. We also hear it from our parents and in the media. So, just what in the world is success? Defined by Webster’s dictionary, success is: a favorable or desired outcome.

A few weeks ago, I had the opportunity to sit down with a group of students and discuss what success means to them. I was intrigued by our discussion and felt it was important to share. This group of students defined success to be; a big house, a good job, lots of money, independence, a driver’s license, paying off a car, getting married, and going to college. The students were happy to learn that all of their answers were correct. As we continued with the conversation, one student made a comment that caught my attention, “I could never be successful, my dad doesn’t have a job, my mom has a drinking problem, and I am responsible for making sure my siblings are clean and to the bus on time. I go to school and come home just to take care of everyone but myself.”

WOW! What a responsibility. I responded to this student by expressing how lucky their parents are to have a child who is not only a great student, but also such a huge help at home. After listening to some other similar stories within the group, I knew it was important to discuss the idea that anyone who is striving for success will have some bumps in the road.

Ultimately, it is important to take care of YOU. Sitting down and talking to your parents about the future you are seeking, how you need to get there, and what you need from them is a good place to start. Prioritizing your needs with your responsibilities can be very difficult. Setting personal goals and starting these conversations NOW will open the door of communication. By doing this, your parents will have a better understanding of what is vital for your future. With open communication, you and your parents can find a way to ensure everyone’s needs are being met. Responsibilities may seem daunting at times and may not be fun; however they are essential to being successful in life.
Notes from the GEAR UP staff

What Will Your New Year’s Resolution Be?

Written by Stephanie Marker

As the New Year is upon us, many people begin thinking about possible resolutions. Resolutions range from serious to silly and simple to difficult. Whether you choose an educational or personal, a long term or short-term resolution, it is no more than a goal. When we set goals or New Year’s resolutions, we should always make sure they are attainable. I am going to share with you a few steps I follow in making my own New Year’s resolutions.

FIRST, I sift through all of the things I want to change or achieve and choose JUST ONE!! With my focus on one specific goal, I am setting myself up for success. Trying to change everything at once can get overwhelming.

SECOND, when you have your goal in mind, choose WHEN TO BEGIN!! Many will choose to begin with the New Year; however, some will start sooner and others later. It can be very rewarding when the New Year comes to admit that you have already been successful with your resolution for a few weeks. Starting later works better for many because it is important to be well rested and in a position to make a change. There isn’t a wrong starting date. Choose what works the best for YOU!

FINALLY, when your chosen start date arrives, COMMIT!! Write your goal down where you will see it often and give it 100 percent effort. You can just write a short statement on a note card and carry it in your purse or wallet. Write it in your planner, or put a sign on your mirror. Wherever you choose, make it visible and simple. We all need friendly reminders sometimes.

We wish you all a safe and Happy New Year full of successful resolutions!!

Birthday Box - January

Jan. 5 – Jeffrey Boyles
Jan. 5 – Kevin Tong
Jan. 5 – Melanie Wales
Jan. 11 – Summer Kopp
Jan. 31 – Christine Dalton

KUDOS KORNER

The GEAR UP staff would like to offer kudos to the following:

• Kudos to the Daniel's Fund Scholarship nominees who completed their applications!
• Kudos to all students who attended the December combined event to Adbay and Sanfords. You were all awesome! We had a blast!!
• Kudos to Joelle Gunnels and Alex Zurawski for helping to decorate the GEAR UP office. It looks fantastic!

TIDBITS

• The graduation ceremony is a cultural tradition termed as a “rite of passage.” It dates back to the 12th century when scholastic monks wore their ceremonial robes and has evolved to fit the society in which it is celebrated ever since.
• Tossing of the graduation hat is a tradition signaling the end of the ceremonies. The flight of the hat symbolizes the flight of the graduates to whatever awaits them.
• Those with a high school diploma statistically earn more money, have less health problems, commit fewer crimes, and are less likely to be unemployed than those who do not.
Dear Don & Delilah,

Q: Dear Don & Delilah,
My boyfriend and I have been dating for a few months. Before we started dating I was getting really good grades, but the more time we spend together the worse my grades get. My parents are starting to worry, and I can’t tell them that my grades are dropping because I have been ditching school to spend more time with him. They would be so MAD! What do I do? If I keep skipping classes my boyfriend and I can spend more time together, but my grades will suffer…

Sincerely, Helpless

A: Dear Helpless,
First we HAVE to draw attention to the fact that you are so smart! You were smart enough to realize that getting good grades and going to class go “hand-in-hand.” (This is true when you go to college too!) I bet you are smart enough to know what we are going to suggest next … and that is; that you already know what to do. It sounds like attending class is important to you otherwise you wouldn’t be so worried. So here is what we think you should do next – talk to your boyfriend, if he really cares about you he will understand that ditching school could seriously jeopardize your future – and no REAL boyfriend ever wants that! If he doesn’t understand? We say ditch him! You are too smart for him anyway!

Sincerely, Helpless

Dear Don & Delilah,
I am a junior this year and all of my friends are graduating this May. When I talked to my school counselor she said that I had enough credits to graduate high school in May too! I really want to, but what does that mean for me? If I graduate early can I go to college next year? What about scholarships? I REALLY want to be with my friends so if I can graduate early without it causing problems for me I really want to.

Sincerely, Confused 11th grader

Dear Confused,
We can totally relate to wanting to spend time with your friends and move on to the next exciting part of your life! We do have a few things you may want to consider … first, if you graduate early will you still be on track for the Hathaway Scholarship? You can check that by printing off your unofficial transcript and entering the information on this website: http://www.wyo4ed.org/hathaway-scholarship. The Hathaway Scholarship is a pretty big deal – it can pay for your complete four-year education! So, before you graduate you may want to check into it, it might be worth it for you to wait. Also, talk to your guidance counselor about BOCES classes – these classes are college courses that you can get both college and high school credits for! And, they are totally free!!! Mostly, we know that you know what is best for you, so take your time to way out your options.

Sincerely, Confused 11th grader

Attention GEAR UP students and parents!

If you have a question for Don and Delilah that you would like published in the newsletter, please send it via email to: mcarlisle@caspercollege.edu, mail it to GEAR UP, Casper College, Strausner Student Center, 125 College Dr., Casper, WY 82601, or bring it by the GEAR UP office. As with other materials, anything deemed inappropriate will not be published. Additionally, you are not required to include your real name, but we would appreciate it if you would include the name of your school.

Meet the GEAR UP Staff

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GEAR UP Work Study Student
## January

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Joelle Gunnels and Alex Zurawski spruce up the GEAR UP office for the holidays.

Laura Zurawski admires Dee the Mammoth at the Middle School Tate Geological Museum visit.

Gear UP students enjoy their tour of Adbay during GEAR UP’s December Adbay Web Design event.