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Queensland Government

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Teaching teenagers how to handle failure

What is failure and what to do when your child fails



What is failure?

- Failure is when you don't achieve what you want.
- Failure is part of life and helps us learn.
- Everyone fails sometimes but we can succeed if we keep trying.

How can failure make teenagers feel?

- Failing at something can make teenagers feel bad.
- For a teenager, a failure could be getting a low score on an exam, missing a goal during a sports game or not finishing school work on time.
- Sometimes teenagers think something is much worse than it really is.
- You can help your teenager see that failing is part of life and helps us succeed.

What to do when your child fails

- Let them talk to you about how they feel.
- Tell them you understand how they feel.
- Tell them you will help them.

What to tell your child

- Everyone fails sometimes.
- Failure helps you learn.
- I will help you.

How to help your child

- Tell them about people you know who have failed but kept on trying.
- Talk about when you have failed.
- Tell them that learning new things takes time.
- Praise your teen when they try hard even if they don't succeed.

Where to go for help

If your teenager cannot stop feeling sad or worried, please ask for help:

- Talk to your family doctor.
- Talk to your child's school.
- Contact Beyond Blue (1300 22 4636), eheadspace, Lifeline (13 11 14) or KidsHelpline (1800 551 800).

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