



True Grit

Talent isn't the only thing kids need to succeed at extracurriculars like swimming, chess or even singing. Their level of grit-or unyielding courage in the face of hardship—also plays an important part. Cultivate strength of character in your children, whether they wear varsity jackets or not, with actionable tips from Caroline Adams Miller, MAPP, author of Getting Grit.

→ Be a role model

If you get passed over for a promotion or feel like dropping out of a 10K race, let your children see you hang in there and rebound. They'll learn the importance of being persistent, optimistic and resilient.

→ Upgrade your praise

Feedback related to mastering a task ("Kick a little harder and you'll make it!") rather than a person's ego ("You can do this because you're strong!") is more effective.

→ Reward bravery

Create a family ritual that celebrates taking risks—regardless of the outcome—to build curiosity, courage and the idea of living without regrets. How about a night of pizza after tryouts for the school play?

→ Don't rush to take away pain

The most resilient individuals are those who grow up experiencing enough disappointment to know they can make it through tough times—but also realize they have people to lean on when they really need support.

→ Help them find motivation

Have your kids create a "channel" in their minds that they can tune in to when they want to give up. It might feature a song, slogan or image that inspires them to keep going.