

CATCH ME IF YOU CAN

ABOUT:

When one of my grandchildren didn't make the team after trying out, the attitude of, *I quit*, followed. One afternoon while watching Winston and our outdoor kitty, Dickens, I wondered how I could encourage her. As Winston and Dickens played, I came up with the idea of setting goals instead of quitting, in hopes of helping her understand the value of persistence and practice and being content with knowing she had done her best.

PURPOSE:

Teaching children persistence is a skill that will enhance their lives into adulthood. Giving them a gentle nudge out of their comfort zone by encouraging them to try new things or practicing a little more each day, builds tenacity. In the story, Winston has no idea what Dickens is doing because it seems like a game that Dickens is challenging him to play. But actually, it was a subtle way to get Winston to practice. Some children love a challenge. Children who are the same as I was when a child, need that subtle encouragement when learning persistence.

SUGGESTIONS:

Children benefit when an adult shares personal stories of failure and how they persevered by following through, emphasizing how effort is what is most important. When helping a child who is struggling, it is good to set small achievable goals for whatever the activity might be: athletics, music, the arts, or academics. If there is a setback, let them know setbacks happen to everyone, the important thing is to bounce back. And as always, to do their very best is the goal.

IDEAS:

Share stories about people who have overcome obstacles by persevering, such as J.K. Rowling, Thomas Edison, and Walt Disney, to name a few.

Study all the different cats in the feline family, their ability to see at night, their hunting prowess.

Talk about the summer Olympic games, past winners and discuss what it might have taken to achieve their goals.

Make a goal collage with the children, a vision board, for them to put where they can see it to remind them to persist.