

Teacher Tips:

Persistence: Keep on Trying



Some children seem to be highly persistent, while others seem to give up easily. As teachers, we want to help children love to take on challenges and not shy away from them or become overly frustrated.

An important part of being persistent is learning from mistakes. When trying is not enough and things don't turn out in the way they'd hoped, we can encourage children to look more closely to see what they could do better. Who can help? Where might they find some answers? With that help, they can try again.

Daniel Tiger's friend, O the Owl, wants to build a tall block tower, but needs encouragement to persist at what he wants to achieve. Just as Teacher Harriet supported O, you can use the following suggestions to support your interactions with children who seem to give up too easily.

- Help children accomplish small tasks that you know they can master so that they can experience the pleasure and gratification that comes with effort and achievement.
- For less persistent children, help them break tasks into smaller parts so that they can reach goals more easily.
- When you see a child struggling and wanting to give up, you might say "I know you can do this. Maybe take a break for a minute and try again."
- It's not always best to take over and do tasks for children when they look or act frustrated. Sometimes, it's okay to let children make mistakes or not quite reach the goal they're aiming for. Point out how hard they've been working. Talk about what they might learn from what went wrong.
- When children succeed, rather than telling them how smart they are, you might ask them to tell you what they've been working on. You can also describe what you've observed: "I can see how much time you've spent building this tall building. Tell me about what you did."
- Remind children that it's natural to feel frustrated and discouraged when learning or trying to do something new. Give children suggestions that just boost their skills to the next higher level ... just like you might give a gentle nudge to help a child who's struggling to get to the next step on the climbing ladder of the slide.
- Be a role model. Demonstrate how much effort you're willing to put into accomplishing tasks, especially ones that you find challenging.



(continued)



Watch more videos and play games with Daniel Tiger by visiting pbskids.org/daniel

Here are examples of things you might say:

- "I see how hard you've been trying; I bet you'll get it soon."
- "You figured it out!"
- "Give it a good try and see what happens. Keep trying."
- "Tell me what you want to do next, and I'm sure we can figure out a plan together. I know if we do some thinking, we can figure this out."
- "What's another way we might solve this problem?"
- "It can be fun to practice getting better at something."
- "Let's think about what we could learn from this mistake."



♪♪ **Keep on trying, you'll get better.** ♪♪



Watch more videos and play games with Daniel Tiger by visiting pbskids.org/daniel