



# Begin With the End in Mind®

*Begin With the End in Mind* means to think about how you would like something to turn out before you get started. Reading a recipe before cooking or looking at a map before leaving on a trip is beginning with the end in mind. For young children, a good example is that of a jigsaw puzzle. Before doing a puzzle, they look at the cover of the box. They start with the end in mind.

## Family Mission Statement

A family mission statement is like a constitution your family lives by that helps you all make decisions for your life. It represents the purpose and values of your family, and will allow you to shape your future according to the principles you as a family hold most dear, rather than letting other people or circumstances determine it.

Mission statements take many forms. Some are long and some are short. They may take form as a saying or phrase, a picture, a poem, or even a song. Make it personal to your family.

### Get started by following these steps:

1. Discuss the following questions with your family:

What does our family want to be known for?

---

---

How do we treat each other?

---

---

What unique contributions can we make?

---

---

What big goals do we want to achieve?

---

---

What unique talents and skills do we have?

---

---

2. Brainstorm ideas, words, and phrases to include in the mission statement. Remember, no idea is a bad idea.
3. Begin crafting your statement, but remember, it doesn't have to be finished in one sitting. It can be a work in progress until you are all happy with the outcome.
4. Post the statement prominently in your home and encourage the entire family to consider it when making decisions or having disputes.

**Here are some sample statements:**

*We want to be the kind of family our dog already thinks we are.*

*The mission of our family is to create a nurturing place of order, love, happiness, and relaxation, and to provide opportunities for each person to become responsibly independent and effectively interdependent, in order to achieve worthwhile purposes.*

*No empty chairs.*



**Younger-Child Activities**

1. Habit 2 provides a good base for activities around goal setting. As a family (or with an individual child), choose an area that needs improvement. The area of improvement, or the broad goal, becomes your end in mind. Then think of specific steps that will lead to achieving this goal. For example, if the goal is to improve as a reader, specific steps may include reading a certain amount of time every day or working several times a week to improve oral fluency.
2. Ask your child if there is something special he or she would like to buy, then help your child plan how much money he or she will need to save and how long it will take. Discuss ideas for earning extra money like doing additional chores and helping around the house.
3. Create a “wants” and “needs” collage with your child. Cut out pictures of various items (toys, candy, vegetables, cleaning supplies, appliances, books, etc.) from a magazine and then ask your child to paste them under the correct column of “wants” or “needs.” Discuss why he or she chose to put the items in the respective columns.
4. Read Chapter 2 of *The 7 Habits of Happy Kids* book with your child and then complete the Parent’s Corner.

**Teen Activities**

1. Discuss your child’s career ambitions and help him or her identify the most important skills that will be needed to succeed in that career. Then encourage your child to meet with the school counselor to discuss his or her career ambitions, and the skills it will require, and plan the school path that will make it happen.
2. Identify and encourage extracurricular activities that support your child’s goals.
3. Help your child look for jobs and internships related to his or her goals.
4. Older kids have more expensive “wants,” but they are also capable of earning more money. Ask your teen if there is something special he or she would like to buy, then help your child plan how much money he or she will need to save and how long it will take. Discuss ideas for earning extra money like getting a part time-job or doing extra chores.