

Launch Points

Turning test prep success into college and career success



Supporting a No Limits Mindset

Among the greatest threats to a young person's success is being discouraged from experiencing competition, criticism or rejection of any form. With the best intentions in mind, some teachers and parents have gone to great lengths to remove as many opportunities for failure from a young person's life as possible.

A mentality of better safe than sorry has infiltrated classrooms, playgrounds and team sports. Many young adults know all too well the frustrating transition that happened in the early 2000s when the safety-first mentality began to take root. Monkey bars disappeared from playgrounds. Dodgeball games were replaced in favor of safer alternatives. Even spirited debates exploring the day's headlines have been replaced with writing reflections. The triumphant last words, scrapes and bruises that were once badges of honor among kids now strike fear in the heart of educators who dread angry phone calls from parents wondering about the adequacy of their child's supervision.

The quality of lessons learned has become a secondary consideration to safety. Denying opportunities for failure or pain is not just frustrating for the fun it deprives kids, it is also alarming in the unforeseen limitations it places on a child's future. There is no question that childhood is safer than it's ever been before, but it might be time for overly protective adults to consider if they've gone too far.

Just like with exercise, pain in the classroom or on the playground is often worth the gain. A stress free environment is an unhealthy environment. Without being challenged, we get bored emotionally and weak physically. Discomfort does not equal danger. On the contrary, discomfort usually makes you more ready for the inevitable dangers that the future holds. By looking at the consequences of the safety-first mentality, we can begin to answer the question of how can adults restore a no limits mindset in our children:

1. Recognize the three myths that can throw a young person off the path to developing a no limits mindset. *Myth one* is the belief that students today are fragile and can't overcome setbacks. Today's young people endure all sorts of stressors that would have been inconceivable to past generations. With social media, rampant grade inflation and an insistence on perfection, every mistake a child makes is amplified. Without having the ability to make mistakes, learning

Atlantic Cape SAT Prep's Newsletter

Our team at AC SAT Prep is always impressed by the progress our students make when armed with good test-taking strategies and a strong routine. Many who follow our program, make progress, get accepted into a college and wonder what is next?

This newsletter is an effort to show students what can come next. Through *Launch Points*, you get short articles looking at the best books, latest research and methods for making students successful. We do the reading for you so you can focus on actually being successful.

Supporting our students doesn't stop with a good SAT score. We want anyone who enrolls in our program to view AC SAT Prep as a go to resource for planning their future with excitement and confidence. You can see more *Launch Point* articles at: www.acsatprep.org.

Atlantic Cape SAT Prep Services

Class Sessions: Cover the math, reading and writing sections of the SAT. Taught by two teachers. One is a math expert. The other a reading/writing expert. Involves three, two-hour class sessions the three weeks prior to an SAT. As part of the tuition fee, all students get a copy of the *College Board's The Official SAT*

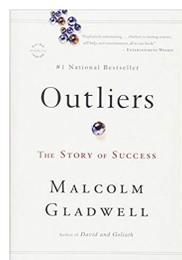
is stifled. Resiliency is impossible and anxiety becomes ever present. *Myth two* the world is an inherently bad place. With adults constantly considering every conceivable threat, it is only natural that kids would conform to the safety-first mentality. While kids fight the cynicism and paranoia that plagues adults, eventually a reluctance creeps in that will limit more than it protects. In actuality, most communities have vast resources dedicated to protecting and supporting young people. Safety measures are important and should limit fear. When safety measure increases fear, they've probably gone too far. *Myth three* is the belief that the future is hopeless and our children lack the ability to meet the demands of an increasingly complex world. Kids will tell you over and over again that they can handle life. The more you deny them opportunities to experience independence, the more ingrained doubt about the future becomes.

2. Recognize the emotional sequence a bad grade or other forms of negative feedback create. All people experience a series of emotions when they get negative feedback that includes anger that you didn't do better, resignation or a feeling that you may not be able to do better, acceptance of how mistakes happened and finally a renewed determination to correct mistakes and perform better the next opportunity you get. Unfortunately, many who experience setbacks get stuck at anger or resignation and are unable to overcome mistakes. Anger or resignation will make staying on the path to a no limits mindset impossible. Recognizing these emotions and making it through the full cycle as quickly as possible creates confidence. Gradually, kids begin to question limitations, look forward to challenges and appreciate success more.

3. Recognize the importance of being identity focused instead of outcome focused. When you are identity focused, you realize bad performances are inevitable. You'll continue to study hard everyday even when you do poorly on a quiz so that you can do well on test day. For those who are identity focused, poor performances may even motivate you to study harder. When you are outcome focused, a poor performance is an indication that you wasted your time. You may be doing something that you'll never master. Thinking you may never master something because you performed poorly once or that one poor performance is a sign that mastery is impossible is a clear sign you lost your way on the path to a no limits mindset. The worse your performance, the more urgent it is you get back on track. This month's article is based on Greg Lukianoff and Jonathan Haidt's *The Coddling of the American Mind* (2018).

Recommended Reading

One proven way to improve critical thinking skills is to make time to read books that explore society, human interaction and other universal themes. This month we recommend:



Malcolm Gladwell's Outliers

A critical and popular success. Gladwell helps us understand the parallels that exist among the world's most outstanding performers from academia to professional athletics. It is both inspiring and insightful.

Study Guide, 2018 Edition. Atlantic County class sessions happen at Mainland Regional High School in Linwood, NJ. Cape May County Sessions to be announced.

-- Class session fee is \$300 (early registration discount is \$270).

Individual and Small Group Tutoring: Individual and small group tutoring (no more than four students) is available by request. Students can focus on math or reading/writing exclusively in this format. To schedule additional tutoring services, please email acsatprep@gmail.com.

-- Individual tutoring is \$100.00 per hour. Small group (no more than four students) \$150.00 per hour.

College Application Essay Writing Support: Students preparing essays for college applications can meet with an instructor for three, hour-long sessions that cover essay planning and organization during the first session, research during the second session and revision and final drafting during the last session.

-- Essay writing support is \$200.00.

Contact Us

Instructors are best reached via email at acsatprep@gmail.com. Questions regarding payment, registration or program details will be answered promptly through email or by phone at 609-827-0679.

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