



FAMILY

Goal Setting

A Guide to Setting Family Goals & Individual Goals — Together

WHY GOAL SETTING CHANGES EVERYTHING

Values tell your family who to be. Rules govern how you behave. Goals determine where you're going. They are the forward-facing dimension of family life — the shared vision that pulls a family together around something not yet achieved.

Research from psychologist Gail Matthews found that people who write down their goals and report them regularly (e.g. in a family meeting) are 2x more successful in achieving them than those who keep them in their heads. For families, the benefit is compounded: when children participate in setting goals, they develop self-discipline, communication, and planning skills that serve them for life. They also learn one of the most important lessons parents can teach — that the future is something you build on purpose, not something that simply happens to you.

TWO KINDS OF GOALS

Family goals are things you pursue together — a shared trip, a savings target, a new tradition, a habit you build as a unit. Individual goals belong to each person — their own growth edges, ambitions, and commitments. Both matter. The family meeting is where both kinds get named, witnessed, and celebrated. When your family knows your personal goals, you're no longer going it alone.

HOW TO SET GOALS AS A FAMILY

The goal-setting session works best as a dedicated event — not squeezed into a regular family meeting, but given its own space. Many families do this annually, often at the new year or the start of a school year. Here's a process that works:

- 1. Create the Right Environment** – Sit around the table with food, paper, and a good attitude. Make it feel like an occasion. What gets honored gets done.
- 2. Start With a Look Back** – Before dreaming forward, acknowledge the past. What went well? What do you want more of? What's ready to change?
- 3. Dream Out Loud — Together** – Ask: "What do we want to experience, accomplish, or become as a family this year?" Let every voice in. No idea is wrong at this stage.
- 4. Each Person Shares Individual Goals** – Go around the table. Every family member shares 1–3 goals of their own. Parents go too. When parents share personal goals, children learn that growth is for everyone.
- 5. Make Goals SMART** – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound. "Be healthier" is a wish. "Walk together on Sunday mornings" is a goal.
- 6. Write Them Down and Post Them** – Written and reported goals are 2x more likely to happen. Post them where your family sees them — the fridge, the app, the family bulletin board.



7. **Check In at the Weekly Family Meeting** – Goals don't need a full review every week — but a quick temperature check keeps momentum alive. Celebrate progress. Adjust without shame.

THE ANNUAL FAMILY PLANNING MEETING

Consider making goal-setting a once-a-year family event — separate from your regular weekly meeting. Review the year. Reflect on what worked. Dream about what's next. Some families do this over a special dinner, a weekend away, or a dedicated Sunday afternoon. The ritual itself becomes part of what holds the family together.

KEEPING GOALS ALIVE ALL YEAR

The biggest threat to family goals isn't failure — it's forgetting. Life accelerates, routines solidify, and the goals you set in January fade by March. Here's how to keep them breathing:

- ◆ Post them visibly — goals on paper in a drawer don't exist. Goals on the fridge or in the app do.
- ◆ Celebrate small wins — progress is motivating. Acknowledge it out loud and often.
- ◆ Name them at the weekly meeting — a 60-second check-in on one goal per meeting is all it takes.
- ◆ Allow goals to evolve — life changes. A goal that no longer fits can be updated, not abandoned in shame.
- ◆ Support each other's individual goals — when your family knows what you're working toward, they can cheer and hold you accountable.
- ◆ End the year with a review — what did we actually accomplish? What surprised us? What carries forward?

A family that sets goals together builds more than a shared calendar. They build a shared future. • familymeetingspot.com



GOAL SETTING EXAMPLES

21 Family Goals • 21 Individual Goals — use these as a starting point and make them your own.

FAMILY GOALS

Goals the whole family works toward together

- 1. Take one family trip this year.**
Doesn't need to be far — shared experiences build the story of your family.
- 2. Eat dinner together five nights a week.**
Research shows shared meals are among the highest-ROI habits for family connection.
- 3. Read one book together each quarter.**
Pick something everyone can enjoy. Discuss it. Make it a ritual.
- 4. Serve in the community together.**
Volunteer as a unit. Kids who serve alongside parents develop empathy early.
- 5. Start a family savings goal.**
A shared financial target — vacation, home project, donation — teaches teamwork.
- 6. Create one new family tradition.**
Weekly, seasonal, or annual. Rituals become the glue of family identity.
- 7. Go screen-free (x) nights per week.**
Protect space for conversation, games, and boredom. All are valuable.
- 8. Learn something new together.**
Cook a new cuisine, take a class, or watch a documentary and discuss it.
- 9. Get outside together every week.**
A walk, a hike, a bike ride. Nature and movement reset the family mood.
- 10. Improve how we handle conflict.**
Agree on a phrase that signals cool-down. Practice repair, not avoidance.
- 11. Memorize a family motto or verse.**
Something short and true you can all say when things get hard.
- 12. Host someone in our home each month.**
Hospitality is a practice. It expands kids' worlds and ours.
- 13. Reduce household screen time by 20%.**
Set a baseline, track it, and celebrate progress together.
- 14. Celebrate each person's milestones.**
Mark the moments — big and small. Recognition builds belonging.
- 15. Have a family photo taken this year.**
Document this season. You'll want it more than you think.
- 16. Hold a family annual planning meeting.**
Review the past year. Set goals together. Make it a tradition.
- 17. Grow something together.**
A garden, a plant, a project. Shared effort builds shared pride.
- 18. Give back financially as a family.**
Choose a cause together. Involve the kids in the decision.
- 19. Improve our morning routine.**
Calm mornings change the whole day. Design it on purpose.
- 20. Take care of our home together.**
Shared ownership of the space means shared pride in keeping it well.
- 21. Tell each other "I love you" daily.**
Love expressed is love received. Say it every day.

INDIVIDUAL GOALS

Goals each person sets for themselves

- 1. Read 12 books this year.**
One a month. Any genre. Just read.
- 2. Learn one new skill.**
An instrument, a language, a trade. Growth is a choice.
- 3. Exercise three times a week.**
Start small. Consistency beats intensity every time.
- 4. Save a specific dollar amount.**
Name the number. Name the date. Make it real.
- 5. Improve one relationship.**
Pick one. Call more. Show up more. Listen better.
- 6. Spend less time on my phone.**
Set app limits. Delete one distraction. Protect your attention.
- 7. Get better sleep.**
A bedtime routine isn't just for kids. Guard your rest.
- 8. Try something I've been afraid of.**
Courage is a muscle. Name the thing and do it.
- 9. Journal or reflect weekly.**
Ten minutes of reflection compounds powerfully over a year.
- 10. Eat better, consistently.**
Not perfect. Just better. One meal at a time.
- 11. Pursue my faith or spirituality.**
Whatever that looks like for you — be intentional about it.
- 12. Complete something I've left unfinished.**
That project, class, or goal that's been waiting. Finish it.
- 13. Get out of a comfort zone once a month.**
New experiences build confidence and resilience.
- 14. Be more present with the people I love.**
Put down the phone. Show up fully. Simple — and that hard.
- 15. Apologize better and forgive faster.**
Repair is a skill. Practice it this year.
- 16. Develop one new healthy habit.**
One habit, anchored to an existing routine. Start tiny.
- 17. Manage stress better.**
Identify what depletes you. Protect what restores you.
- 18. Write a letter to someone I admire.**
Gratitude expressed changes both the writer and receiver.
- 19. Volunteer for something I believe in.**
Give your time to something bigger than yourself.
- 20. Improve at my work or school.**
Ask for feedback. Take one course. Close one skill gap.
- 21. Celebrate my own progress.**
You're allowed to notice how far you've come. Do it.