

Opportunity to Succeed...

Tomorrow is Opening Day for the 2015/2016 school year. Many of our kids and students have already left their homes to move into college dorms and apartments. High school kids participating in football, volleyball, cheer, band, and all of the other various fall activities have been hard at it for weeks now. The perpetual calendar that is life keeps rolling on.

The first day of school brings a buzz to households all across our country. Outfits and lunches are chosen with a precision that soon fades as the school days progress. In our house, the kids have already requested a special back-to-school breakfast. For this special day, Dad will wake up early to make sure their first day starts off right. Meanwhile, Mom will do her part, fixing hair and filling out the required forms and paperwork that make the world go 'round.

Bedtime will come all too early tonight. The lingering fun from summer vacation will fade as our kids drift off to sleep on their last night of freedom. In the morning, alarm clocks will ring and the schedule will begin. Another school year full of potential, waiting to be seized.

Through the years, our kids have often been stressed by an upcoming recital, an "important" game, new classmates, or most any other event that has potential for the unknown. As a kid, new experiences are often wrapped in anxiety and filled with uncertainty. When you have less than ten years of life experience to go by, new adventures can be daunting.

As parents, all we can do is listen and hug and offer up support. One of the most difficult concepts I've had to learn (as a dad) is that there is no way to pass on the wisdom of life experience. At the beginning of each day, you have to let your kids go and do and figure things out for themselves. They must make mistakes to grow.

Watching and *allowing* those mistakes (the one's where nobody gets hurt) is a difficult part of parenting.

When I see my kids getting worked up about new experiences, I lean heavily on a simple bit of wisdom. I'm not sure where I heard it, who I heard it from, or if I made it up while parenting my own kids. Wherever it came from, it seems to click with my kids.

Every new day presents a series of choices and events in your life. Of these, there are very few that we truly control. When we wake up, we can control our attitude and the reactions we will have to the upcoming events. We control our choices for the day. We cannot control fate or karma or God's will or any other way that we mortals describe the way that life unfolds.

It is an exercise in madness to worry or get worked up about all of this. What will be, will be. One way to prepare for the future unknown is to view the positives that will occur. Each day, each event, every choice we make, every game, recital, or at-bat presents us with an *opportunity to succeed*. History is filled with initial failures that led, in some convoluted way, to wild success. We only know this by looking backwards.

The coming school year will present you and yours many opportunities to succeed. No doubt, they will be there. Take advantage of them. Make good choices. Seize the moments and every opportunity you are given to succeed.

Until next week, keep smiling.

-Please send questions or comments to Drs. Parrish at www.ParrishDental.com.