



# no "kid"ding did you know?

## topic: goal setting

### website resources

[How to Make a New Year's Resolution](#)

[How to Make New Year's Resolutions Stick](#): An interview with clinical psychologist John Norcross about how to increase your odds for success

[MyGoals.com](#)

[Popular New Year's Resolutions](#)

[Where to Begin: Expert Advice on Maintaining Resolutions](#)

*The following "No 'Kid'ding" article appeared in the January 2009 issue of Alternative for Youth's (AFY) [Youth Matters newsletter](#).*

One topic that we often discuss with our youth is goal setting and goal achievement. As we start the New Year, many of us are setting resolutions for the year and looking for ways to achieve those resolutions in the future. Indeed, the New Year is a great time to think of renewal, to let past mistakes go, and to gear up for a great year! Adults and youth alike can make goals for the year ahead to improve their lives. Try some of the tips below for yourself or with a young person you know. Did you know:

- The top three most popular New Year's resolutions are to maintain healthy weight, get out of debt and to stop smoking ([Associated Content](#)) and other popular resolutions include save money, get a better job, get fit, eat right, get a better education, drink less alcohol, reduce stress overall, reduce stress at work, take a trip and volunteer to help others ([USA.gov](#)).

- Nearly half of all adults in the United States made resolutions this year.

- A key to achieving the smallest to the largest goals is to get started immediately. Don't wait for inspiration; make inspiration by taking action today!

- You CAN do things to make your resolutions more attainable. Set yourself up for success by following some of these tips:

- Set goals that are realistic and meaningful. Make your goals achievable and something you really want. If you don't have strong, internal motivation within yourself, you won't be successful.
- Make your resolutions specific. Instead of "I want to be healthier," opt for "I want to exercise regularly" or "I will cut down on my television watching."
- Create a plan that breaks large goals into smaller ones, and tells you what to do next and all the steps required to complete the goal. What baby steps do you need to take?
- Include in your plan, alternatives to a behavior that you want to change. If you want to quit smoking, but smoking is the only time you have to yourself, what other forms of alone time are available to you?
- Create your plan IMMEDIATELY to harness your New Year motivation.
- Write down your resolutions and plans and share them with someone you trust.
- Think year round, knowing that a hundred tiny steps throughout the year make a resolution happen. Develop a ritual or habit for revisiting your plan perhaps with a friend, relative or mentor.
- Add a spiritual dimension to your goals. For example, if one of your goals is to get fit, you may also resolve to get outdoors more often instead of going to the gym. Time outside will help you get in balance with nature, and will honor both the physical and spiritual sides of yourself.
- Remain flexible knowing that plans will change and you can change them. If plans change or you don't fully achieve your goals, think in



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positive terms rather than focusing on how much you fall short of your aspirations.

- View setbacks as lessons for growth. Mistakes can be and usually are opportunities for learning. If you fall short of your goals, ask yourself what kept you from achieving them and then try to make corrections.
- Celebrate small successes.

What kind of New Year's resolution have you or will you make for yourself?

*Note: The above is provided as information and does not indicate an endorsement by Alternatives for Youth of the listed websites.*