

Toxic Achievement Culture



Toxic achievement can effect a young person's:

- Mental health and wellbeing
- Physical health
- A loss of passion and burnout
- Strain peer and family relationships

Avoid adding to the pressure by:

- 1** **Setting** realistic expectations
- 2** **Cultivating** a growth mindset
- 3** **Encouraging** a work-life balance
- 4** **Promoting** inclusivity and collaboration
- 5** **Recognising** and rewarding effort

Toxic achievement culture is a critical societal issue where an individual's self-worth is entangled to their academic or extracurricular achievements.

This culture is not merely about striving for success; it represents a deep-seated belief that a student's value is solely dependent on performance, often propelled by external pressures from parents, schools, and society.

This relentless drive to excel is leading many students to prioritise accolades over genuine learning and personal growth, often at the expense of their own wellbeing and interpersonal relationships. Some students are overfilling their schedules with activities aimed to "get ahead". However, the consequences are proving to be detrimental on students' mental and physical health resulting in burnout and heightened stress levels. We need to advocate for a more balanced and holistic approach to achievement, emphasising the importance of resilience, wellbeing, and the pursuit of diverse interests. There is nothing wrong with having ambition, but it's crucial to ensure that this desire doesn't push our young people into a toxic cycle of achievement and make them feel they must achieve in order to matter.



1

Setting realistic expectations

Adult carers should establish achievable goals and expectations, acknowledging the limits of their offspring. Unrealistic expectations only lead to burnout and dissatisfaction.

Cultivating a growth mindset

Encourage students to see challenges as opportunities to grow rather than insurmountable obstacles.

2



3

Encouraging a work-life balance

Create an environment where work-life balance is not just supported, but actively encouraged. This might include balancing academic work with a part time job, adequate sleep, exercise and time with friends.



Promoting inclusivity and collaboration

Shift the focus from individual achievements to collaborative efforts. Encourage students to work together, fostering a sense of community rather than unhealthy competition.

4



5

Recognising and rewarding effort

Celebrate milestones and efforts, not just end results. Recognising hard work and dedication can boost morale and motivation.

