

In some cultures, children are often told they can achieve anything if they try hard enough.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of giving children this message?

It is common for children in some parts of the world to be presented with the idea that they can accomplish anything if they apply enough effort. This essay will explore the benefits and drawbacks which can emerge from sending such a message.

To begin with the positives, the delivery of this message might encourage children to develop a strong work ethic. For instance, children who have been told that studying hard enough can help them pass a maths test are more likely to persevere in their studies than those who have not. As a result, they have a greater likelihood of succeeding in their exams. In addition, the self-esteem of children who have been given this message may be higher. This is because they should have more confidence that their efforts will produce their desired results, and this can lead to improved wellbeing due to higher belief in autonomy.

However, there are some negatives to consider, one of which is that this message might instil in children an unrealistic worldview. To illustrate, if a child has been led to believe that, with sufficient effort, they could become a professional basketball player, they may end up stressed and frustrated due to the physical limitations, such as height, which cannot be altered by their hard work. This suggests a related problem, which is making children believe that unsuccessful individuals only have themselves to blame. If a child thinks that effort reliably leads to success, that child is more likely to attribute failure in a person's life to a lack of endeavour instead of complex financial, educational or genetic factors.

In conclusion, although children can develop diligence and empowerment if they are told that working hard enough will give them what they want, these benefits should be weighed against the risks of an unrealistic and judgemental perspective on life which such an idea can generate.