

# Helping Senior School Students Focus, Organise themselves and Get Motivated in 2018



**DEVELOPING MINDS**  
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My name is Kirrilie Smout and I am a clinical psychologist who works with teenagers. I am from Developing Minds and we are working with the school this year to help the students achieve their best results.

This month we spoke to the students about how they might be able to motivate themselves to study, regularly complete homework and stay organised. We talked about research which shows that “IQ” is only responsible for a small part of success at school. In other words, **it doesn't much matter how smart you are. What matters more is what you do during the year.**

We also talked with the students about how they might motivate themselves to regularly work on study.

Some of the most important strategies included: 1) using written lists and visual reminders rather than relying on their memory for knowing what they have to do; 2) setting up habits and systems to get things done (link an action with some kind of trigger – a time or place or activity) and 3) doing shorter **focussed** periods of homework/study rather than longer distracted periods of study. We suggested they do this by putting phones across the room for 15 minute periods, closing programs and using software to limit access to programs – all for short periods of time.

We also discussed using mini rewards and punishments for themselves to increase motivation, using “chunking” (starting with a small, easy step, or trying to study in short periods rather than wait until a long extended period of time) and motivating ourselves to start by imagining what it will *feel like* to do well or to be disappointed in ourselves.

It was great to work with the students. We have encouraged them to email us with any questions and we will see them next term to talk about revision strategies.

Please feel free to contact me anytime if you have any questions as a parent. If you would like some more support in helping your student through senior school then there are a range of free articles on my website: [www.developingminds.net.au](http://www.developingminds.net.au) or

you can access them via our facebook page Developing Minds Psychology and Education.

Kirrilie Smout

Kirrilie Smout is a clinical psychologist and owner of Developing Minds Psychology. She counsels teens facing challenges in their life and presents psychological wellness and study skills seminars to teachers, parents and students in schools across Australia. For more information go to [www.developingminds.net.au](http://www.developingminds.net.au)