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young post

**New
year,
new
you**

2008

Make your goals come true

Pia Muggerud provides tips on planning and keeping your resolutions.

- Be specific. For example, instead of saying you want better grades, set a specific goal of raising your grades next term from, say, a B to an A. It's easier to hit the jackpot if you have a target in sight.
- Put it in writing. Write down exactly what you want to achieve and put it in a place where you will see it every day. This will remind you of what you're working towards. Word your goals in the positive: "I will always do all my homework", instead of, "I will not neglect my homework".
- Be realistic. When you think about setting goals, make sure they are within your reach. Be mindful of your finances, schedule and other factors in your life. It's unreasonable to expect to make a lot of big changes at the same time.
- Make an action plan. Create a timeline with steps towards your goal. Set deadlines for each step and cross them off as you go. Sometimes just crossing things off and watching your list get smaller can give you a sense of accomplishment and help you stay motivated.

Sick of making resolutions and failing to keep them? Two experts show you how to make your goals come true, writes **Rebecca Tsui**

As the old year draws to a close and the New Year beckons, many people are thinking about their New Year's resolutions. But given that so many of us fail to keep these sacred promises, what does it take to make them a reality?

Teen coach Jaime Simpson and life coach Pia Muggerud both agree that planning is the key to success.

Most teenagers set out to get

better grades, make more friends and have a healthier lifestyle.

"You need to be clear on what you really want to achieve. If you want better results at school, it won't happen unless you set up a plan," Simpson says. "You need to be realistic with your resolutions and be prepared to work hard to achieve them."

Besides following a plan, Simpson and Muggerud both agree that support from family and friends is also

important. "Tell friends and family what your resolution is and ask them to keep you accountable to it," Simpson says.

Having a support network is useful if people get stuck or need a little encouragement, Muggerud adds. The key is not to be afraid to talk about it.

"You might be surprised at the support you find when you share a commitment with the people you are close to," she says.

Staying positive is also important. "Share your goals with a friend and ask them to help keep your spirits up."

But success is not guaranteed, warns Muggerud, even for those who have lots of support and stick to their game plan. This is because we lose track of our

priorities, especially if we are trying to keep up with our peers.

"You can easily lose sight of your own values when comparing yourself to others," she says.

Believing in yourself and your resolutions is the most important thing, but staying focused also counts.

"[Teenagers] are bombarded with new things every day. Once a resolution has been decided upon, the new option can take your attention away, and you lose interest because the new option is more exciting," Muggerud says.

To overcome this, Simpson advises teenagers to keep working on their goals until they become a habit.

"I know many people who

say they are going to eat better and exercise more. They do this only for the first week of the year, then the second week they miss a day or two, which takes them out of the habit. Once the habit is broken, the resolution will also be broken."

When it comes to improving grades, Simpson says students have to stick to their study timetable.

"Once you stick to your schedule for a few weeks, you will develop a new habit. Once this new habit is developed, you will improve your grades because you are putting in more effort. This, in turn, will achieve your resolution," she says.

Art in a vending machine
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