

Mindset Information for Parents

Aims:

- To define the terms 'growth mindset' and 'fixed mindset'
- To explain how and why we teach mindsets
- To identify ways in which you can support your child at home

Prime Minister

Winston Churchill **repeated** a grade during elementary school.

He was placed in the **lowest** division of the **lowest** class.

Composer

Beethoven's teacher called him a **hopeless** composer.

He wrote **five** of his greatest **symphonies** while **deaf**.

Writer

Leo Tolstoy **dropped** out of college.

He was described as '**unable** and **unwilling** to learn.'

Role models

- Einstein's teacher said that he was 'academically subnormal'
- Michael Jordan's coach said that he wasn't more talented than other people
- Walt Disney was told that he lacked 'creative imagination'

What do we mean by the word 'mindsets'?

Please click on this link to find out:

[Carol S. Dweck discussing how the two mindsets influence behaviour and achievement.](#)

Mindsets:

Fixed mindset:

- Belief that ability is fixed
- People are born smart/sporty, etc.
- Depressed after failure
- Puts in less effort
- Doesn't try new strategies

Growth mindset:

- Belief that people can grow and develop
- Sees failure/setback as a learning opportunity
- Puts in effort and persists
- Tries alternative routes to success

Mindsets: not just intellect

People embrace fixed or growth mindsets about all of their qualities, not just intelligence. Many people believe that our other qualities – creativity, artistic ability, athleticism, personality traits – are qualities with which we are born. However, Carol S. Dweck asserts that any and all of these qualities can be cultivated.

When do you feel smart?

Fixed mindset:

- “When I don’t make any mistakes.”
- “It’s when I finish first and it’s perfect.”
- “When something is easy for me and others can’t do it.”

Growth mindset:

- “When it’s really hard, and I try hard, and I can do something I couldn’t before.”
- “When I work on something for a long time and finally figure it out.”

What's the big deal?

Fixed mindset thinking results in:

- a false sense of superiority, undermined by a deep sense of self-doubt
- a fear of failure and a refusal to take risks
- a feeling that failure permanently defines you as a loser
- a need to prove yourself again and again

What's the big deal?

Fixed mindset thinking results in:

- the belief that only untalented, ungifted people have to work for success and that effort somehow reduces you
- a need for validation and reassurance in labels ('smart'), whether earned or not
- a desire to blame others or outside circumstances when things don't go your way

Growth Mindset

Growth Mindset thinking results in:

- a love for learning and self-improvement
- a desire to be challenged
- a willingness to work for positive results.
- a belief that you can control the outcomes in your life with effort and practice
- the ability to learn from mistakes and failures
- emotional resilience


Growth Mindset in the classroom

- Feedback
- Success criteria
- Challenge
- Direct teaching of growth mindset

Feedback and Praise

Praising children's intelligence puts them in a fixed mindset.

Parent:



Fabulous! You are amazing!

Child:



I'LL ALWAYS need praise

How do you respond...?

- When a child succeeds?
- When a child fails?

Messages children hear

- Parent says: “You learned that so quickly! You’re so clever!”
- Child hears: “If I don’t learn something quickly, I’m not clever!”

Messages children hear

- Parent says: “You’re so brilliant, you got an A without even studying!”
- Child hears: “I’d better stop studying or they won’t think I’m brilliant.”

Praise

- Praise effort rather than ability
- Encourage children to see learning as a process that is more valuable than the end results
- Model how to give feedback to the children as this will provide them with a structure to work with
- Identify challenges for children and ask them to identify their own challenges

Our Mindset curriculum is designed to develop:

- resilience
- a desire to be challenged
- the quality of talk within the classroom
- independent learners
- strategies to success

How do we do this?

- Initially a series of six lessons to embed the concept every year
- Classroom displays
- The language the staff and the children use
- Feedback and explicitly discussing effort

Lessons use:

- stories and familiar characters
- talk-based learning
- debates
- the brain
- pictures and objects to represent challenges and barriers to learning
- follow-up activities in the classroom
- enjoyment to promote learning and understanding

Why should you teach growth mindsets to children?

- Research shows that the children make greater academic progress if they embrace the growth mindset concept
- It helps to create independent learners
- It builds resilience and life-long learners
- It creates a collaborative culture in the classroom where everyone is supported

How can you support your child?

- Model your own growth mindset and discuss things you find challenging
- Praise their hard work and process rather than the marks they get
- Praise them when they think for themselves, work well in teams and change their minds after thinking something through
- Accept that failure is a really important part of learning
- Encourage them to challenge themselves in their learning

Useful links

- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/grownups/help-your-child-try-new-things>
- <https://www.mindsetkit.org/growth-mindset-parents>
- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-13128701>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2zrtHt3bBmQ>

Resources for home

Books:

- *I Can Be Anything* – Jerry Spinelli
- *Someday* – Eileen Spinelli
- *You Be You* – Linda Kranz
- *Making a Splash* – Carol E. Reiley

App:

- My Fantastic Elastic Brain