

Nurturing a Growth Mindset

"Cultivation of a growth mindset starts with an understanding that greatness is largely about work."

-Jonathan Fields



A growth mindset is a child's belief that his or her abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work. It is important for children to see that their success in school or intelligence is not set in stone. Instead of worrying about how smart they *THINK* are (or aren't) they can work to improve. It's important for youth to see failure as an opportunity for growth.

Ways to Promote Growth Mindset

Engage kids in conversations that focus on their progress and overcoming challenges. Instead of asking "How was your day?" Ask:

- What did you learn today?
- What mistake did you make that helped you learn something?
- What was something you did that you had to work really hard at?
- What was your biggest challenge today?

Encourage them to keep trying. Let them know that effort is how they improve.

Give back positive reinforcement for their process of learning. Try not to praise personal abilities like being pretty, smart, or athletic. Instead praise effort, persistence, and using creative strategies. Click [HERE](#) for ideas. This will help them develop confidence and encourage them to try the things they are not initially great at.

Allow them to fail. Don't interrupt their learning process to correct them or tell them that they are wrong. They need to learn for themselves so that they can grow on their own. Failure teaches them important life lessons such as resiliency. If we, as adults, do not let children fail, they will grow into adults with no perseverance or confidence in their ability to work hard and be successful.

Activity Ideas

Research and discuss famous people that failed before they were successful, and did not give up. For example, Michael Jordan was cut from his high school basketball team. What if he said to himself "I guess I just can't play basketball?" What if he just quit because someone else told him he wasn't good enough? Abraham Lincoln, Einstein, Beyonce, Oprah, Walt Disney, and so many more failed at first, but they did not give up. Click [HERE](#) to read more examples of famous people who failed at first.

Create a "Self Talk" chart. This is a chart that changes the negative things we say to ourselves into positive growth mindset self-dialogue. Have them fill in this chart and keep coming up with more ideas. Click [HERE](#) for more examples and the full printable version.

Instead Of....	Try Thinking...
I'm not good at this	What am I missing?
I give up	

You can find more information and activity ideas about growth mindset [HERE](#).