



How to help your child do anything!

How children learn and how they perceive themselves as learners has become a key factor in education over the last few years. The Early Years has always had this as an integral part of the curriculum through the Characteristics of Effective Learning but it is equally important all the way through a child's life, and in to adulthood. If you can help your child develop a Growth Mindset then you will truly be helping them to do anything!

Work on Growth Mindset was championed by American Psychologist **Carol Dweck**, you can see some of her fantastic research on both YouTube and TED Talks, just put in her name.

Fixed Mindset	Growth Mindset
Central beliefs	
We have a predetermined amount of intelligence, skills or talents which cannot be changed.	We can develop our abilities, intelligence or talents with persistence, effort and a focus on learning.
Leads to	
<p>A desire to look clever and therefore a tendency to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid challenges for fear of failure • See mistakes and failures as proof you are stupid • Believe if you have to work for success you are not clever • Feel threatened by other's success • Be motivated by rewards and praise • Have low resilience and give up easily 	<p>A desire to learn and therefore a tendency to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embrace challenges • See mistakes and failures as learning opportunities • Believe hard work (practice and effort) is the path to mastery • Be inspired by other's success • Be self-motivated • Have high resilience and persist even when a task is difficult
Mottos	
Either you're good at something or you aren't If you're really good at something you shouldn't have to try	No matter how good you are at something, you can always improve If you have to try, you must be learning.
Results	
Children may plateau early and achieve less than their full potential	Children are confident to push themselves and reach ever higher levels of achievement

So how do you help your child develop a growth mindset?

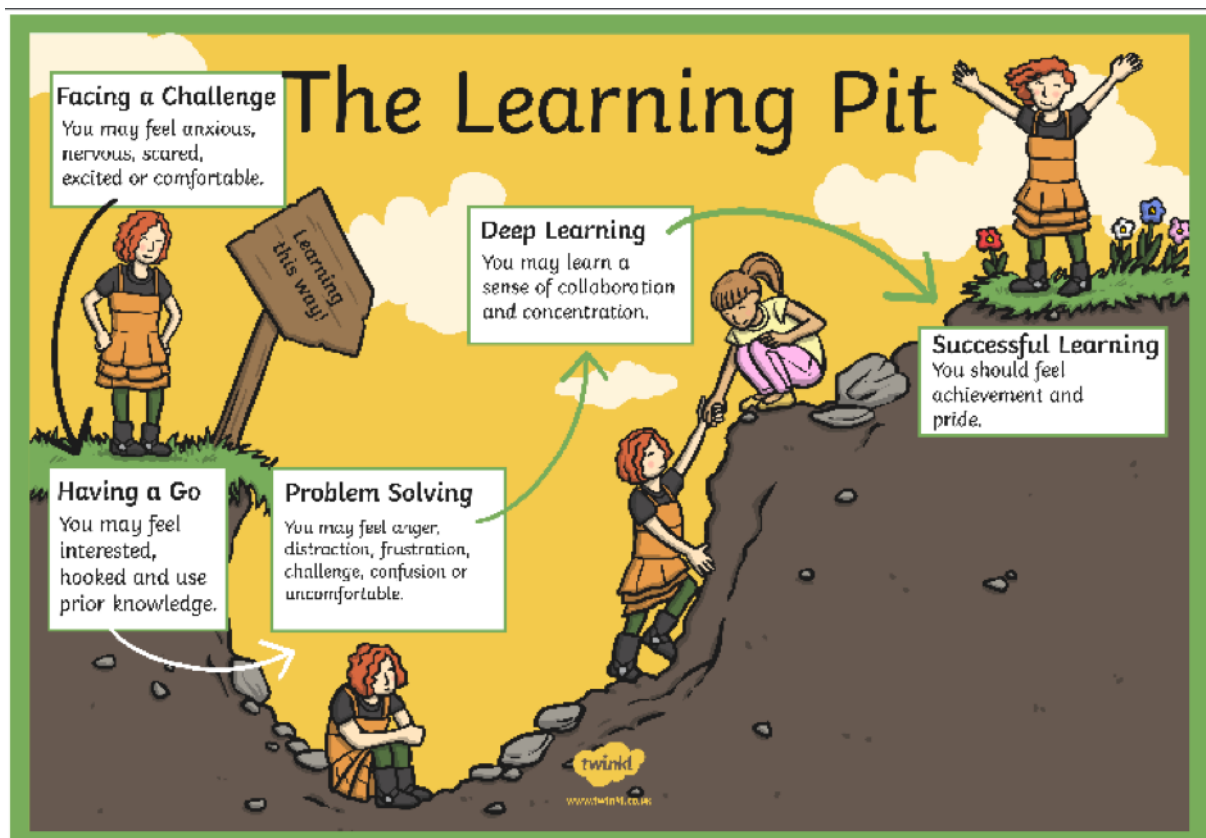
Praise carefully, not for the outcome but for the process. Praising outcomes, intelligence, ability or talent sends messages that encourage a fixed mindset. Encourage children to practise and put in effort to get to where they need to be, be overt about praising the effort and the process NOT the final outcome.

Learning to persist using our own independent strategies is a skill that will be beneficial throughout their lives.

So what should I say?

X Outcome Praise	✓ Process Praise
You are so clever at...	I have noticed you have been trying really hard at...
You are a genius	All your hard work is really paying off, well done
What a clever girl / boy	I'm proud of how committed you are to your learning, you never give up
You are lucky you are so good at...	You have really improved, what helped you?
You are just like me, I was brilliant at art too	You are just like me, I worked really hard to improve at art too
You are just like me, I am rubbish at maths	I found maths tricky too, stick with it and work hard and you will see the benefits
Don't worry that you didn't get a great result, it must have been a bad paper	How do you feel about not getting the result you wanted first time? Are you clear on what you need to do to improve next time?
At least you did better than ...	Didn't ... do well, he must have worked hard, good for him.
This is wrong, how many times have we told you to get it right first time?	Mistakes are OK, it shows you are learning. Do you know now how to make it right?
Fantastic work, no mistakes at all	How did you do that?
You are lucky you don't have to try hard.	I love the fact that you took the challenge, you're not there yet but you will be with that attitude.

Encourage children to challenge themselves, make mistakes, get things wrong and fail. The important message is that this is good learning and they just can't do it YET. Without mistakes and failure new learning cannot happen. Discuss errors and mistakes and help children to see them as opportunities to learn and improve. Encourage children to think positively and believe in themselves. Talk openly about the Learning Pit and how you will feel at each stage of acquiring a new skill.



Other ideas to help at home...

Help children to make links to a time when they learned something new and it was a challenge.

Do you remember when you couldn't... and now you can?

You can't... YET but just like that you will be able to if you keep trying.

Help children learn from their mistakes.

Make mistakes in front of your child and react positively to them, talk about what you have learned. Encourage your child to keep trying if they make a mistake.

Narrate a growth mindset so your children hear the positive messages.

That guy is a brilliant footballer, he must practise so hard.

Harriet is really good at Maths she keeps going even when she finds it difficult.

I heard Kit passed his piano exam second time around. It was great that he tried again, his mum must be proud.

Be curious about your child's work.

What did you learn today? Did you find it difficult? How are you going to get even better?

Talk to your child about the fact that success doesn't come easy and all the things that they might face before they get there.



Redefine the meaning of a few common words that we all use...

Effort

Effort is the **secret to getting better**. The more targeted effort you put in the more you will get out.

You can help your child by encouraging them to practise key skills and putting their best effort in to anything they do. Did you try your hardest? I love the way you are practising your spellings / brilliant bonds / reading.

Difficult

Difficult is **a challenge**, an exciting opportunity for risk-taking and having a go.

You can help your child by letting them try new things and creating excitement about it as they push outside of their comfort zone. Recognise each achievement and point out how far they have come and how much they are learning.

Mistakes

Mistakes are **learning opportunities**.

You can help your child by helping them see that when they are working outside their comfort zone they will make mistakes and most importantly they can learn from them.

Yet

Probably the most important word for shifting children from a fixed to a growth mindset.

You can help your child by reframing their conversations.

I can't do it!

You can't do it yet! Is there anything you can do to help yourself or I can do to help you?

Fail

A fail is just a **First Attempt In Learning**.

Further information

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/grownups/help-your-child-try-new-things> A parent friendly guide.

www.mindsetworks.com/science/ A guide for those who like the science behind the ideas!

www.biglifejournal.com website with lots of resources but they aren't free!

Mindset: How you can fulfil your potential by Carol Dweck, a book by the expert.

Your Fantastic Elastic Brain by JoAnn Deak, a great book to share with your child.

Beautiful Oops by Barney Saltzberg, another great book to share with your child.

The Dot by Peter Reynolds, another great book to share with your child.

Ish by Peter Reynolds, another great book to share with your child.